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Lucia Clearwater
Dorothy Clearwater

Lucy N. Clearwater

AUTOBIOGRAPHY

OF

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

WITH SELECTIONS
FROM HIS OTHER WRITINGS

I would rather have it said "He lived usefully," than "He died rich."
Benjamin Franklin

The Father of all the yankees.
Thomas Carlyle

EDITED
WITH COMMENTS, NOTES, BIBLIOGRAPHY, AND
TOPICS FOR STUDY

BY

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BOSTON, U. S. A.
D. C. HEATH AND COMPANY, PUBLISHERS
1908

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EDITOR'S NOTE

THE *Autobiography* of Benjamin Franklin is valuable chiefly because it is the veracious record of the life of a self-made man who by his own effort became both learned and great. The English in which it is written is not altogether correct; while the style has wonderful perspicuity and charm, it by no means offers a model for imitation. The real subject of interest is the man who stands forth by his own revelation in the plain, unvarnished, but complaisant narrative of his deeds. The beginning was in an ordinary boyhood, in the colonial epoch, when almost all must earn their own livelihood. For many years, each phase of his life was the replica of scores of others, his contemporaries. The distinguishing characteristics of the man were discerned only when he had become great and exceptional in the esteem of the world. Then, it was apparent that a singular uniformity of aim and method had characterized him from the beginning of his career, so that each period of his activity had prepared him for the next. He passed from small affairs to great as naturally and inevitably as if, from the first, he had foreseen what was to come and had shaped his course with it in view. Nor did he ever attain an eminence which it was beyond his natural qualities to sustain. To the very end of his life, the gravest responsibilities rested upon him; the affairs intrusted to his management required the nicest judgment, the most unvarying patience and good humor, the greatest tact and skill in dealing with men; but in all he was unfailing, and so difficult was it to find among younger men one able to fill his place at the court of France, that the old man, in failing health, was obliged to remain more than two years after the signing of the treaties.

Finally, when he was old, recognizing how typical had been

his situation, how common the means of his rise to greatness, he had the generosity and the ingenuous courage to write an account of his early life which included a confession of his follies and mistakes, and of the pains the effort to remedy them cost him. Thus, the *Autobiography*, penned with the view of instructing and aiding the young in like situation, is not the least important of the many services rendered by Benjamin Franklin in his long life. It remains, with the institutions he founded, and the national independence he aided in establishing, a benefit to posterity.

In this edition of the *Autobiography*, it is thought best to make no attempt to present a complete history of Franklin's life. His own writing carries the narrative forward through his active and formative years, as ordinarily reckoned, then breaks off just when he began to be absorbed in affairs of public importance, to which he gave a longer time than all the years he had spent in his own business. This later period of Franklin's life belongs, as it were, to the public, and the story of the services he rendered is told in history, where every schoolboy reads of him.

But this is not all. Franklin was more versatile than any other man of his generation. He was, indeed, a diplomatist and a statesman, but he was also a great scientist, a discoverer, an inventor, an author whose writings, after more than a century, are still read for their own sake. When Poor Richard no longer wrote to instruct or amuse his fellow countrymen, he found occasion for his ready wit in pieces designed to set in a satiric light his political enemies; or, in more gentle humor, he wrote pleasing short pieces, "bagatelles," to suit the humor of the day and pass an idle hour, but, nevertheless, full of meaning. In the selection of a few of these writings of Franklin for this edition, we have sought to give such as are illustrative of his wit, his humor, his gift of suggesting, in the form of pleasing discourse, some pregnant idea, or bit of satire, or moral truth.

Of the literary quality of these writings, and of the autobiography, it is enough to say that they fulfill, in a remarkable degree, his own requirement of excellence in composition.

"How shall we judge of the goodness of a writing?" he asked. "Or what qualities should a writing have to be good and perfect of its kind?

"*Answer.* To be good it ought to have a tendency to benefit the reader, by improving his virtue or his knowledge. But, not regarding the intention of the author, the method should be just; that is, it should proceed regularly from things known to things unknown, distinctly and clearly, without confusion. The words used should be the most expressive that the language affords, provided that they are the most generally understood. Nothing should be expressed in two words that can be as well expressed in one; that is, no synonyms should be used, or very rarely, but the whole should be as short as possible consistent with clearness; the words should be so placed as to be agreeable to the ear in reading; summarily, it should be smooth, clear, and short, for the contrary qualities are displeasing."

Both Irving and Franklin learned to write prose by study and imitation of the same authors — *The Spectator* papers, Addison, Bunyan, Defoe; but the result in diction and style differed as widely as the temperaments of the men. Irving, endowed with æsthetic and literary perception, assimilated these qualities, in the study of his masters in literary art. The reading of his essays impresses on the mind the meanings of words derived from classic languages, and makes the young writer familiar with the intricate forms of sentence structure borrowed from their literatures. But Franklin, from the same models, learned how to arrange his thought in an orderly manner, how to condense his meaning, and to proceed from each thought to the next. His mind instinctively shunned complicated forms borrowed from languages with which he was not familiar, but found a nat-

ural and easy mode of expression in the clear, direct, brief style characteristic of Bunyan or Defoe. Thus, familiarity with the writings of Franklin fills the mind with store of homely but expressive words, and the terse, rich phrases of our English idiom.

A word should be said here about aims and methods of instruction in the use of this text. The reading of a good autobiography is like tracing the pattern of another person's life ; no reading is more useful or instructive, but, unfortunately, this sort of narrative requires the illumination of parallel experience for full appreciation. Young readers quickly pass the limit of their own age and lack the imagination necessary for pleasure, or for the understanding of experience beyond their years. In a degree, the *Autobiography* is an exception to this rule. It is one of the few lives of great men containing a clear and definite thread of narrative interesting alike to young and old. It also presents an illustration, in a single instance, of conditions of life already familiar through stories of colonial history. Moreover, the homely advice and the proverbs of Poor Richard, sown broadcast on the leaves of ten thousand Almanacs a year, have been the seed from which the familiar sayings of daily life in this country have sprung. And so, the reading of the *Autobiography* may become the means of uniting in one pleasant conception many parts of familiar knowledge. In order to gain this result, the instructor, from his wider and fuller knowledge, and from deeper understanding, must direct the topics for study to definite ends. These may be summarized briefly :

1. The life of Franklin should appear as an historical life ; that is, he should clearly seem to belong to a time, and to have lived under conditions that have now passed away. By close correlation with other reading or study, a historical background may be created having the characteristics of the eighteenth century, and of life in a new country.

2. The reading of the *Autobiography* should impress on the mind the personal element in the career of Franklin. This lad was one of many bred in conditions of life essentially similar; the story told reveals how few opportunities he had, how scanty his resources were, and, indirectly, how well he used both.

3. Franklin should appear as a self-taught man. He describes his studies, tells how he learned to write, and, later, frequently points out the usefulness of this accomplishment.

4. Franklin was typically, in the American sense, "a self-made man." His precepts and maxims, and the example set, have inspired a host who have believed that in a free republic the way from the log cabin or the canal boat to the President's chair is open to any boy. The requirements of an older civilization and more complex social conditions now temper the ambition of the schoolboy, but the tenor of Franklin's life is still an accepted ideal of effort in a land where all men are free.

5. In the reading of the *Autobiography*, there is a rare opportunity to note the characteristics of the scientific temper of mind — the habit of close and accurate observation, of recording carefully what is discovered; the openness to change of opinion on new evidence; the eager quest for the cause of phenomena. Of these traits, the child in Boston, the boy in London, the man of business and affairs, furnish many illustrations.

6. It is necessary to remember that Franklin's composition in the *Autobiography* cannot be used for the purpose of literary study. Indirectly, his diction and phraseology have a wholesome effect on the mind of reader or writer, but examined in detail, numerous inaccuracies in grammatical and rhetorical structure appear. Nevertheless, this piece of writing is the most remarkable instance the world affords of a composition in its parts devoid of literary qualities or charm of style, but lifted by the close adaptation of method to subject, by simplicity, direct-

ness, clearness, and a certain happy use of common English phraseology, to the very highest place as literature.

7. Readers should gain a just understanding of the value and permanence of Franklin's public services, and to this end should trace from the smallest beginnings the growth of his influence, and the plans he devised.

In reading Franklin's *Autobiography* with young pupils, it is peculiarly easy to fall into one error. The story coincides so closely with events of historical importance that the reading of the life easily may become the study of colonial history. Precisely the reverse is what should take place. All the pupils' previous knowledge of the colonial period of American history should be brought to bear on the story of the single life that it may appear to move in and form a part of the age in which it belongs, but the vivid, human, personal life of the man, Franklin, must be the central matter for attention, and all the rest subordinate, incidental. In the end, the reader should feel that he has known the individual intimately, and followed him, through many years of changing fortune and varied experience, from his humble beginning to success and honor.

It has been the purpose of the editor of this edition of the *Autobiography* to aid all who use it in gaining an appreciation of the rare and ingenuous character of the revelation of personal qualities in the narrative itself, and of the times which furnished the circumstances in which the man's greatness grew.

Franklin was by no means the ideal great man. Jealous enemies brought serious charges against his honor, and even his friends admitted that in his faults and pleasures he was quite human. More than any other man of his greatness, he was one who must be estimated and honored in the calm review of his whole life. The attention should not be fixed either upon errors or on admired qualities too steadily; but, rather, many qualities and the tenor of a long life must be held in

consideration. From these, presently, a just estimate will be formed.

A word of acknowledgment is here due to the work of a man no longer living. The two-hundredth anniversary of Franklin's birth was honored by the publication of a new and more complete edition of his writings. To the preparation of that edition, Albert Henry Smyth gave years of most intelligent and painstaking effort. He read many manuscripts in Europe and in America, never before examined; texts already in print he compared with the original manuscripts; he thus presented an accurate version and a series of letters representative of the varied phases of activity of Franklin's long life. He also added all historical information which could throw light upon the writings of Franklin, or on the events of his life. The text followed in this edition of the *Autobiography*, and in quotations from Franklin's letters, is that given by Smyth, and many notes and facts have been cited on his authority. Whenever possible, credit has been given by the use of the letter S. and the proper reference, but the editor wishes further to acknowledge great personal indebtedness to this work of a scholar who had both the qualifications and the opportunity of preparing an authoritative and invaluable edition of the works of Benjamin Franklin.

H. A. Davidson.

THE STORY OF THE MANUSCRIPT

No manuscript ever had a more singular and romantic history than the original sheets of this famous *Autobiography*. The first part, to the year 1731, was written by Franklin in England. It was brought to Philadelphia with his other papers when he returned to America, in 1775. When, in 1776, he was preparing to go to France, in order to secure his most valuable papers against the fortunes of war, he placed them in a trunk which he gave into the charge of an old friend, who kept it at his country seat near the city. This was wise forethought, for during the occupation of Philadelphia, Major André lived in Franklin's own house, and committed acts of vandalism there, carrying off books, instruments, and a fine portrait of the owner. The country place of Franklin's friend was also ransacked by soldiers of one party or the other. When Richard Bache, Franklin's son-in-law, heard of this he hastened thither to secure these papers. He found them scattered, and many were missing. The manuscript of the *Autobiography* seems to have been among these, for several years later, in 1782, the closely written sheets fell into the hands of Abel James, Franklin's Quaker friend, who recognized and read them. He at once made a clean copy which he sent to Franklin, in France, urging him to complete at the earliest opportunity so interesting and valuable a document. This copy Franklin sent to his English friend, Benjamin Vaughn, who soon returned it, urging even more earnestly that he complete the narrative. Upon this, Franklin resolved to set about it, but in his busy life he was little inclined to this sort of writing; however, a few pages were written before he left France. He then resolved to spend a part of the homeward voyage on his memoirs, but again he put it off.

After Franklin's return to Philadelphia, public service was still required of him, although the old man longed to enjoy his friends, his home, and his grandchildren. He intended to finish the *Autobiography*, but as often as he thought of setting about it he put it off, so that only a few more pages were added. Instead, he had one of his grandsons make four fair copies of the whole as far as written, and these he sent to friends in France and in England. One of these was given to a very dear friend, a gentleman of France, who, when Franklin left that country, had accompanied him on his journey, day by day, until he came to the port from which he sailed. This man presently was beheaded, a victim of the guillotine, and his manuscripts went to a daughter.

Franklin's manuscripts were left by will to his grandson, William Temple Franklin. It was supposed that an edition of the *Autobiography* and of Franklin's other writings would soon be published, but Temple Franklin was either indolent, or unequal to the great task, and the edition edited by him did not appear until 1817–19. Meantime, thinking that the copy would be easier to read than the original manuscript of his grandfather, W. T. Franklin offered to exchange with the lady in France owning the copy. She, of course, accepted, and once more the original crossed the ocean, or rather the Channel, from London, and was soon forgotten. Later, a cousin of the lady inherited the manuscript, and Mr. John Bigelow, when minister to France, had the honor and pleasure of obtaining this famous manuscript, and of printing from it the first edition from the original. Many editions had been printed from the copies, and also corrections had been made by editors who thought Franklin's composition too plain and homely for the fashion of the day; thus, when the original text was for the first time printed accurately it was found that some twelve hundred errors had crept into the earlier editions. D.

Chronology of the Life of Benjamin Franklin, Printer.

	Residence, Business, etc.	Public Services, etc.	Writings,[1] etc.
1685.	Josiah Franklin emigrated to New England.		
1689.	Married Abiah Folger.		
1706.	January 6, O. S. } In Boston,		
	" 17, N. S. } Born, B. F.		
1712.	Family removed from Milk Street to Hanover Street.		
1714.	In grammar school.		Childish verses to Uncle Benjamin.
1715.	In Brownell's school.		
1716.	Put to chandlery with his father, at the sign of the Blue Bell.		
1717.	James F. returns from London, and sets up as printer.		*Reading.* Bunyan's works, Plutarch's Lives, be't 1712 and 1718, Defoe's Essay on Projects, Historical Collections, etc.
1718.	Apprenticed to James.		
1719.	James begins to print *Boston Gazette* for Postmaster.		Ballads, "The Light House Tragedy," etc.
1721.	James starts *New England Courant.* Becomes a vegetarian.		Imitation of Spectator Papers, etc. *Study* of Logic, Navigation, Grammar, Rhetoric, etc.
1722.	James F. arrested. Articles of apprenticeship cancelled.		Anonymous contributions to *The Courant.* Conducts paper for James.
1722-1723.	Continued quarrels with James.		"Dogood Papers."
1723.	*Oct.* Runs away; goes to New York, Philadelphia. Finds work with Keimer.		Acting editor for *The Courant*, writes many pieces for it.
1724.	Attracts attention of Governor Keith. Returns to Boston, Father refuses to set him up as printer, Oct. 18. Returns by way of R. I.		

1724.	*Nov.* Goes to England.		Much Reading.
1725.	Works in London, in Palmer's and Watts's printing houses.		Pamphlet on Liberty and Necessity, etc.
1726.	Returns to Philadelphia with Mr. Denham, merchant.		Journal of voyage.
	Forms "Junto."	Beginning of Philosophical Society came from the members of the Junto.	"Rules for a Club," etc.
1727.	Death of Mr. Denham.		
	Returns to Keimer's.		
1728.	Sets up printing office in partnership.		Many papers, to be read before the Junto.
1729.			The "Busy-Body Papers."
	Bought the *Pennsylvania Gazette* from Keimer.		"Preface to the Pennsylvania Gazette."
			"Nature and Necessity of Paper Currency," etc.
1730.[2]	Bought out partner by aid of friends.		
	Married Deborah Reed.		
1731.		Starts a subscription library, called "The Mother of all North American subscription libraries."	Constant writing for *The Gazette.* (This was continued until retirement in 1848.)
1730–1733.	Worked hard to establish business.		
1732.	*Oct.* Printed first almanac.		"Dialogues concerning Virtue and Pleasure."
			Poor Richard's sayings, and Prefaces, etc., for Almanac (continued, annually, until 1857).
1733.	Started first branch printing office in Charleston, S. C.	Studied French, Italian, Spanish, Latin.	
1734.	Visited Boston and brother in R. I.		"A Meditation on a Quart Mug."
	Death of son Francis, æt. 4, from small-pox.	Enlarged the Junto.	
1735.			Protection of Towns from Fire.

Only a small part of Franklin's writings are mentioned; titles of well-known pieces and especially of pamphlets, or of articles written to promote enterprises of public usefulness have been selected.

[2] Date in *Autobiography* is not correct. S. X. p. 155, Note.

CHRONOLOGY OF THE LIFE OF BENJAMIN FRANKLIN, PRINTER. — *Continued.*

	RESIDENCE, BUSINESS, ETC.	PUBLIC SERVICES, ETC.	WRITINGS, ETC.
1736.	Chosen Clerk of General Assembly; thus gets printing of votes, laws, paper, money, etc.	Clerk of Pennsylvania General Assembly.	"Hints for Those That Would Be Rich."
1737.	Appointed Deputy-Postmaster of Philadelphia.	Reform of City Watch.	
1738.	Whitefield's visit. Printing of his sermons.	Formed UNION FIRE COMPANY. The Building of the Meeting House for Whitefield.	Prefaces to Almanac. Articles in *Gazette*.
1740.	Intends to start a magazine.		Papers for the Junto (in all these years, 1732–1740–).
1740–1748.	Branch printing houses in S. C., R. I., Pa., Conn., and West Indies. S. X. p. 171.		"Rules of Health and Long Life."
1742.		Invention of "Pennsylvania Fire Place."	
1743.			"A Proposal for Promoting Useful Knowledge among the British Plantations."
1744.	Death of father, in Boston.	Proposed the PHILOSOPHICAL SOCIETY (continues to present time).	
		Starts an Association for Public Defense. Aids in organization of "Penn. Regiment." Provides cannon, etc.	"An Account of the New-Invented Pennsylvania Fire-Places."
1746.	Visits Boston. Sees electrical experiments of Dr. Spence. Buys apparatus. Carries on electrical experiments in Philadelphia.		
1747.		The Association for Defense. Voluntary Militia organized.	"Plain Truth."
1748.	Takes David Hall into partnership.		"Advice to Young Tradesmen."

1748.	Retires from active business.		
1749.	In Philadelphia.		
	Electrical experiments.	Beginning of Philadelphia Academy.	"Proposals Relating to Education of Youth," etc.
		Became UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA.	
		Justice of the Peace, soon resigned office.	
		Common Councillor.	
1750.	Elected Member of Assembly. Oct.	Sent as Commissioner to treat with the Indians.	"Properties and Effects of the Electrical Matter."
1751.		Aids Dr. Bond in establishing a hospital. Present "PENNSYLVANIA HOSPITAL."	"Idea of the English School."
		Discovers POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE ELECTRICITY.	
1751.	Entered assembly.	Member of Pennsylvania Assembly until Oct., 1764. For full detail of public services in assembly, S. X. p. 187—	"Exporting Felons to the Colonies."
		Experiments in street cleaning.	
1752.	Mother dies in Boston.		
	Experiments to prove identity of lightning and electricity.	Proves IDENTITY OF LIGHTNING AND ELECTRICITY.	Papers on Electricity, Meteorological Observations, etc., etc.
1753.	Appointed Deputy Postmaster-General.	Reforms whole post-office system in Colonies.	
	Tour of inspection of post-offices.	1757. Elected Member of Royal Society.	Prefaces to Poor Richard's Almanac continued.
		Receives Copley Medal.	
		Receives M. A. degree from Harvard and Yale Colleges.	
1754.	Sent as Commissioner to treat with Six Nations.	Presents a Plan of Union at Congress.	Albany Plan of Union, printed and sent to all colonies, and to England.
	Discusses taxation of Colonies with Governor Shirley in Boston.	Letters on Colonial Taxation.	Three letters to Governor Shirley.
1755.	Meets General Braddock to arrange postal service for his army.	Militia Bill passed.	"Electrical Experiments." Dialogue between X, Y, Z, etc.

Chronology of the Life of Benjamin Franklin, Printer. — *Continued.*

	Residence, Business, etc.	Public Services, etc.	Writings, etc.
1755.	Provides wagons, horses, etc., for transporting supplies.		
1756.	Made Colonel. Sent to build forts on the frontier.	Colonel Franklin builds Forts Allen, Norris, and Franklin.	"A Plan for Settling the two Western Colonies," etc.
1757.	Takes part in quarrels between Assembly and Governor. Sent to England as agent of Assembly to secure the right to tax the Proprietary estates.	Drew first bill for paving city (not passed). Secured the approval of bill to tax estates of the Proprietors in Pa.	"A Striking Sun Dial." Report of Committee of Aggrievances. "The Way to Wealth" (Father Abraham's Speech).
1757–1762.	Agent of Pennsylvania in England.	Wins the case against Proprietors.	
1762–1764.	In Philadelphia.	Speaker of Assembly. Fails of re-election.	Papers on Electrical Experiments, and other Scientific Subjects.
	Returns to England as special agent of Pennsylvania. Later of Massachusetts, New Jersey, and Georgia.	Opposes Stamp Act. Examination before House of Commons.	
1774.	Famous incident of Hutchinson letters.	Deprived of Deputy-Postmastership.	Edict of the King of Prussia and other political pieces.
1775–1776.	At Philadelphia and in the Colonies.	Journey to Canada. Signs Declaration of Independence.	Many Letters written in the public service.
1776.	Sent by Congress to secure aid from France.	Became at length first Minister Plenipotentiary to France.	
1776–1785.	Resident at Passy, near Paris.		
1778.	Signed Treaty of alliance and commerce with France.		Many political pieces, such as "The Sale of the Hessians," etc.; and Bagatelles, — "Dialogue with the Gout," etc., etc.
1782.	Signed Preliminary Treaty at Paris.		
1783.	Signed Treaty of Peace between England and the United States at Versailles.		
1785.	Returned to Philadelphia.		Long official reports to Congress, etc.
1790.	Apr. 17. Died in Philadelphia.		

A FEW TRIBUTES TO FRANKLIN

As a writer on morality and general literature, the merits of Dr. Franklin cannot be estimated properly without taking into consideration the peculiarities . . . in his early history and situation. He never had the benefit of any academical instruction, nor of the society of men of letters. His style was formed entirely by his own judgment and occasional reading, and most of his moral pieces were written while he was a tradesman, addressing himself to the tradesmen of his native city. We cannot expect, therefore, that he should write with extraordinary eloquence or grace, . . . [but] that eloquence is the most meritorious that is calculated to convince and persuade the multitude to virtue. Nothing can be more perfectly and beautifully adapted to its object than most of Dr. Franklin's compositions of this sort. The tone of familiarity, of good will, and homely jocularity, the plain and pointed illustrations, the short sentences, made up of short words, and the strong sense, clear information, and obvious conviction of the author himself, make most of his moral exhortations perfect models of popular eloquence, and afford the finest specimens of a style which has been but too little cultivated. — Lord Jeffrey *in The Edinburgh Review*, July, 1806.

If to be venerated for benevolence, if to be admired for talents, if to be esteemed for patriotism, if to be beloved for philanthropy, can gratify the human mind, you must have the pleasing consolation to know you have not lived in vain.

George Washington.

I think I adequately appreciate the greatness of Washington, yet I must place Franklin above him as the consummate type and flowering of human nature under the skies of Colonial America. *Horace Greeley.*

No individual, perhaps, ever possessed a juster understanding, or was so seldom obstructed in the use of it by indolence, enthusiasm, or authority. *Lord Jeffrey.*

One of the most remarkable men, certainly, of our times, as a politician, or of any age, as a philosopher, was Franklin, who also stands alone in combining together these two characters, the greatest that man can sustain, and in this, that having borne the first part in enlarging science by one of the greatest discoveries ever made, he bore the second part in founding one of the greatest empires in the world. *Lord Brougham.*

No other mind as acute as Franklin's existed in the world at that time. *Albert Henry Smyth.*

The name of Benjamin Franklin will be immortal in the records of freedom and philosophy; but it is more particularly dear to a country, where, conducted by a most sublime mission, this venerable man knew how very soon to acquire an infinite number of friends and admirers, as well by the simplicity and sweetness of his manners, as by the purity of his principles, the extent of his knowledge, and the charms of his mind. — From *Letters of Condolence, addressed to Congress by order of the French Assembly, on the death of Franklin.*

No American has ever attained greatness in so many ways or made so lasting an impression on his countrymen.
John Bach McMaster.

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AUTOBIOGRAPHY

OF

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

AUTOBIOGRAPHY

OF

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

I. Franklin, the Boston School Boy and Printer's Lad

1706–1723

Comment. In the story of a man's life we look first to see what sort of start he had. An inheritance of fair natural ability and favorable conditions in which to grow up, give a boy a fair chance; but if he lacks a good home, he may grow to manhood without the training or the habits he will need in later life. While there are exceptions, usually the boy who starts out with a heavy handicap never makes up for it, and the one who inherits fair ability and early decides to use every opportunity well, becomes the kind of man we most admire and trust. Therefore, the first questions about any man who has won more than usual reputation, esteem, or success, are: What manner of body, mind, and disposition came to him from his ancestors? What did his parents do for him while he was young that gave him a better start than other boys had? What special opportunities did the circumstances of the family or of the community in which he was born, afford him? How young did he begin to understand that he, himself, must take advantage of every aid that came in his way; that is, what did he do for himself, while he was still a boy, thinking little about the future, which in the end gave him a better chance in life? For Benjamin Franklin, these questions are answered in the first part of his Autobiography. He wrote it after he had become an old man, that from his own life he might show his grandchildren

how a boy, born in a poor family, in a new country, who began to work for his living at ten years of age, still, by making the most of such opportunities as he had, and by adopting certain principles of conduct, became in the end prosperous, and honored, and great. A careful reading of what he has written will reveal Franklin's own opinion of the secrets of his advancement in the light of after years, and these determining factors in the boy's life should be kept in mind in reading, in later parts of the Autobiography, of the mistakes he made and of his rapid rise in fortune, position, and reputation. D.

Franklin's Outline. My writing. Mrs. Dogood's letters. Differences arise between my Brother and me (his temper and mine); their cause in general. His Newspaper. The Prosecution he suffered. My Examination. Vote of Assembly. His manner of evading it. Whereby I became free. My attempt to get employ with other Printers. He prevents me. Our frequent pleadings before our Father. The final Breach. My Inducements to quit Boston. Manner of coming to a Resolution.

Twyford, at the Bishop of St. Asaph's, 1771.

DEAR SON[1]: I have ever had pleasure in obtaining any little anecdotes of my ancestors. You may remember the inquiries I made among the remains of my relations when you were with me in England, and the journey I undertook for that purpose. Imagining it may be equally agreeable to you to know the circumstances of my life, many of which you are yet unacquainted with, and expecting the enjoyment of a week's uninterrupted leisure in my present country retirement, I sit down to write them for you. To which I have besides some other inducements. Having emerged from the pov-

[1] William Franklin, afterwards royal governor of New Jersey. He was at this time, 1771, a man of middle age.

erty and obscurity in which I was born and bred, to a state of affluence and some degree of reputation in the world, and having gone so far through life with a considerable share of felicity, the conducing means I made use of, which with the blessing of God so well succeeded, my posterity may like to know, as they may find some of them suitable to their own situations, and therefore fit to be imitated.

That felicity, when I reflected on it, has induced me sometimes to say, that were it offered to my choice, I should have no objection to a repetition of the same life from its beginning, only asking the advantages authors have in a second edition to correct some faults of the first. So I might, besides correcting the faults, change some sinister accidents and events of it for others more favorable. But though this were denied, I should still accept the offer. Since such a repetition is not to be expected, the next thing most like living one's life over again seems to be a recollection of that life, and to make that recollection as durable as possible by putting it down in writing.

Hereby, too, I shall indulge the inclination so natural in old men, to be talking of themselves and their own past actions; and I shall indulge it without being tiresome to others, who, through respect to age, might conceive themselves obliged to give me a hearing, since this may be read or not as any one pleases. And, lastly (I may as well confess it, since my denial of it will be believed by nobody), perhaps I shall a good deal gratify my own *vanity*. Indeed, I scarce ever heard or saw the introductory words, "*Without vanity I may say*," etc., but

some vain thing immediately followed. Most people dislike vanity in others, whatever share they have of it themselves; but I give it fair quarter wherever I meet with it, being persuaded that it is often productive of good to the possessor, and to others that are within his sphere of action; and therefore, in many cases, it would not be altogether absurd if a man were to thank God for his vanity among the other comforts of life.

And now I speak of thanking God, I desire with all humility to acknowledge that I owe the mentioned happiness of my past life to His kind providence, which led me to the means I used and gave them success. My belief of this induces me to *hope*, though I must not *presume*, that the same goodness will still be exercised toward me, in continuing that happiness, or enabling me to bear a fatal reverse, which I may experience as others have done; the complexion of my future fortune being known to Him only in whose power it is to bless to us even our afflictions.

The notes one of my uncles (who had the same kind of curiosity in collecting family anecdotes) once put into my hands furnished me with several particulars relating to our ancestors. From these notes I learned that the family had lived in the same village, Ecton, in Northamptonshire, for three hundred years, and how much longer he knew not (perhaps from the time when the name of Franklin, that before was the name of an order of people, was assumed by them as a surname when others took surnames all over the kingdom), on a freehold of about thirty acres, aided by the smith's business, which had continued in the family till his time, the

eldest son being always bred to that business; a custom which he and my father followed as to their eldest sons. When I searched the registers at Ecton, I found an account of their births, marriages, and burials from the year 1555 only, there being no registers kept in that parish at any time preceding. By that register I perceived that I was the youngest son of the youngest son for five generations back. My grandfather, Thomas, who was born in 1598, lived at Ecton till he grew too old to follow business longer, when he went to live with his son John, a dyer at Banbury, in Oxfordshire, with whom my father served an apprenticeship. There my grandfather died and lies buried. We saw his gravestone in 1758. His eldest son Thomas lived in the house at Ecton, and left it with the land to his only child, a daughter, who, with her husband, one Fisher, of Wellingborough, sold it to Mr. Isted, now lord of the manor there. My grandfather had four sons that grew up, viz.: Thomas, John, Benjamin, and Josiah. I will give you what account I can of them, at this distance from my papers, and if these are not lost in my absence, you will among them find many more particulars.

Thomas was bred a smith under his father; but, being ingenious, and encouraged in learning (as all my brothers were) by an Esquire Palmer, then the principal gentleman in that parish, he qualified himself for the business of scrivener; became a considerable man in the county; was a chief mover of all public-spirited undertakings for the county or town of Northampton, and his own village, of which many instances were related of him; and much taken notice of and patronized by the then Lord Halifax.

He died in 1702, January 6, old style, just four years to a day before I was born. The account we received of his life and character from some old people at Ecton, I remember, struck you as something extraordinary, from its similarity to what you knew of mine. "Had he died on the same day," you said, "one might have supposed a transmigration."

John was bred a dyer, I believe of woolens. Benjamin was bred a silk dyer, serving an apprenticeship at London. He was an ingenious man. I remember him well, for when I was a boy he came over to my father in Boston, and lived in the house with us some years. He lived to a great age. His grandson, Samuel Franklin, now lives in Boston. He left behind him two quarto volumes, MS., of his own poetry, consisting of little occasional pieces addressed to his friends and relations, of which the following, sent to me, is a specimen.[1]

"'T is time for me to throw aside my pen,
When hanging sleeves read, write, rhyme like men.
This forward spring foretells a plenteous crop;
For, if the bud bear grain, what will be the top!
. . . . . .
If first year's shoots such noble clusters send,
What laden bows, Engedi-like, may we expect in the end!"

He had formed a short-hand of his own, which he taught me, but, never practising it, I have now forgot it. I was named after this uncle, there being a particular affection between him and my father. He was very pious, a great attender of sermons of the best preachers, which

[1] Franklin never added these verses. They are quoted here from *The Many-Sided Franklin*. This uncle Benjamin was in the habit of writing verses to his little namesake in America; the child began to reply in kind before he was old enough to go to school. These lines in answer to his childish verses were sent to him in 1713.

he took down in his short-hand, and had with him many volumes of them. He was also much of a politician; too much, perhaps, for his station. There fell lately into my hands, in London, a collection he had made of all the principal pamphlets relating to public affairs, from 1641 to 1717; many of the volumes are wanting as appears by the numbering, but there still remain eight volumes in folio, and twenty-four in quarto and in octavo. A dealer in old books met with them, and knowing me by my sometimes buying of him, he brought them to me. It seems my uncle must have left them here when he went to America, which was above fifty years since. There are many of his notes in the margins.

This obscure family of ours was early in the Reformation, and continued Protestants through the reign of Queen Mary, when they were sometimes in danger of trouble on account of their zeal against popery. They had got an English Bible, and to conceal and secure it, it was fastened open with tapes under and within the cover of a joint-stool. When my great-great-grandfather read it to his family, he turned up the joint-stool upon his knees, turning over the leaves then under the tapes. One of the children stood at the door to give notice if he saw the apparitor coming, who was an officer of the spiritual court. In that case the stool was turned down again upon its feet, when the Bible remained concealed under it as before. This anecdote I had from my uncle Benjamin. The family continued all of the Church of England till about the end of Charles the Second's reign, when some of the ministers that had been outed for nonconformity holding conventicles in Northamptonshire,

Benjamin and Josiah adhered to them, and so continued all their lives: the rest of the family remained with the Episcopal Church.

Josiah, my father, married young, and carried his wife with three children into New England, about 1682.[1] The conventicles having been forbidden by law, and frequently disturbed, induced some considerable men of his acquaintance to remove to that country, and he was prevailed with to accompany them thither, where they expected to enjoy their mode of religion with freedom. By the same wife he had four children more born there, and by a second wife ten more, in all seventeen; of which I remember thirteen sitting at one time at his table, who all grew up to be men and women, and married; I was the youngest son, and the youngest child but two, and was born in Boston, New England.[2] My mother, the second wife, was Abiah Folger, daughter of Peter Folger, one of the first settlers of New England, of whom honorable mention is made by Cotton Mather, in his church history of that country, entitled *Magnalia Christi Americana*, as "*a godly, learned Englishman*," if I remember the words rightly. I have heard that he wrote sundry small occasional pieces, but only one of them was printed, which I saw now many years since. It was written in 1675, in the homespun verse of that time and people, and addressed to those then concerned in the government there. It was in favor of liberty of conscience, and in behalf of the Baptists, Quakers, and other sectaries that had been under persecution, ascribing the Indian wars,

[1] The date of the emigration of Josiah Franklin was 1685. S.–X. 144.

[2] Born January 6, 1706, old style; January 17, 1706, as we now reckon.

and other distresses that had befallen the country, to that persecution, as so many judgments of God to punish so heinous an offense, and exhorting a repeal of those uncharitable laws. The whole appeared to me as written with a good deal of decent plainness and manly freedom. The six concluding lines I remember, though I have forgotten the two first of the stanza; but the purport of them was, that his censures proceeded from good-will, and therefore he would be known to be the author.

FRANKLIN'S BIRTHPLACE, MILK ST., BOSTON

"Because to be a libeller (says he)
I hate it with my heart;
From Sherburne [1] town, where now I dwell
My name I do put here;
Without offense your real friend,
It is Peter Folgier."

My elder brothers were all put apprentices to different trades. I was put to the grammar-school [2] at eight years of age, my father intending to devote me, as the tithe of his sons, to the service of the Church. My early readiness in learning to read (which must have been very early, as I do not remember when I could not read), and the opinion of all his friends, that I should certainly make a good scholar, encouraged him in this purpose of

[1] The name Sherburne was later changed to Nantucket.

[2] The grammar school stood on School Street, Boston, near the spot where the Franklin monument now is.

his. My uncle Benjamin, too, approved of it, and proposed to give me all his short-hand volumes of sermons, I suppose as a stock to set up with, if I would learn his character. I continued, however, at the grammar-school not quite one year, though in that time I had risen gradually from the middle of the class of that year to be the head of it, and farther was removed into the next class above it, in order to go with that into the third at the

Advertiſements.

AT the Houſe of *George Brownell* in *Second Street*, (formerly the Houſe of Mr. *John Knight*, deceas'd) is taught, Reading, Writing, Cyphering, Dancing, Plain-work, Marking, with Variety of Needle-work. Where alſo Scholars may board.

ADVERTISEMENT OF MR. BROWNELL'S SCHOOL
From the "Pennsylvania Gazette"

end of the year. But my father, in the mean time, from a view of the expense of a college education, which having so large a family he could not well afford, and the mean living many so educated were afterwards able to obtain, — reasons that he gave to his friends in my hearing, — altered his first intention, took me from the grammar-school, and sent me to a school for writing and arithmetic, kept by a then famous man, Mr. George Brownell, very successful in his profession generally, and that by mild, encouraging methods. Under him I acquired fair writing pretty soon, but I failed in the arithmetic, and made no progress in it. At ten years old I was taken [1]

[1] In 1712, Josiah Franklin removed from the house on Milk Street to one at the corner of Hanover and Union streets. Here he hung out the sign of the Blue Ball, and carried on his business of making candles and soap for many years.

home to assist my father in his business, which was that of a tallow-chandler and soap-boiler; a business he was not bred to, but had assumed on his arrival in New England, and on finding his dyeing trade would not maintain his family, being in little request. Accordingly, I was employed in cutting wick for the candles, filling the dipping mould and the moulds for cast candles, attending the shop, going of errands, etc.

Sign of the Blue Ball

I disliked the trade, and had a strong inclination for the sea, but my father declared against it; however, living near the water, I was much in and about it, learnt early to swim well, and to manage boats; and when in a boat or canoe with other boys, I was commonly allowed to govern, especially in any case of difficulty; and upon other occasions I was generally a leader among the boys, and sometimes led them into scrapes, of which I will mention one instance, as it shows an early projecting public spirit, though not then justly conducted.

There was a salt marsh that bounded part of the mill pond,[1] on the edge of which, at high water, we used to stand to fish for minnows. By much trampling, we had made it a mere quagmire. My proposal was to build a wharf there fit for us to stand upon, and I showed my comrades a large heap of stones, which were intended for a new house near the marsh, and which would very well suit our purpose. Accordingly, in the evening, when the

[1] The marsh lay between the present Haymarket Square and the outer water.

workmen were gone, I assembled a number of my playfellows, and working with them diligently, like so many emmets, sometimes two or three to a stone, we brought them all away and built our little wharf. The next morning the workmen were surprised at missing the stones, which were found in our wharf. Inquiry was made after the removers; we were discovered and complained of; several of us were corrected by our fathers; and, though I pleaded the usefulness of the work, mine convinced me that nothing was useful which was not honest.

I think you may like to know something of his person and character. He had an excellent constitution of body, was of middle stature, but well set, and very strong; he was ingenious, could draw prettily, was skilled a little in music, and had a clear, pleasing voice, so that when he played psalm tunes on his violin and sung withal, as he sometimes did in an evening after the business of the day was over, it was extremely agreeable to hear. He had a mechanical genius, too, and, on occasion, was very handy in the use of other tradesmen's tools; but his great excellence lay in a sound understanding and solid judgment in prudential matters, both in private and public affairs. In the latter, indeed, he was never employed, the numerous family he had to educate and the straitness of his circumstances keeping him close to his trade; but I remember well his being frequently visited by leading people, who consulted him for his opinion in affairs of the town or of the church he belonged to, and showed a good deal of respect for his judgment and advice; he was also much consulted by private persons about their affairs when any difficulty occurred, and frequently chosen an

arbitrator between contending parties. At his table he liked to have, as often as he could, some sensible friend or neighbor to converse with, and always took care to start some ingenious or useful topic for discourse, which might tend to improve the minds of his children. By this means he turned our attention to what was good, just, and prudent in the conduct of life; and little or no notice was ever taken of what related to the victuals on the table, whether it was well or ill dressed, in or out of season, of good or bad flavor, preferable or inferior to this or that other thing of the kind, so that I was brought up in such a perfect inattention to those matters as to be quite indifferent what kind of food was set before me, and so unobservant of it, that to this day if I am asked I can scarce tell a few hours after dinner what I dined upon. This has been a convenience to me in traveling, where my companions have been sometimes very unhappy for want of a suitable gratification of their more delicate, because better instructed, tastes and appetites.

My mother had likewise an excellent constitution; she suckled all her ten children. I never knew either my father or mother to have any sickness but that of which they died, he at 89, and she at 85 years of age. They lie buried together at Boston, where I some years since placed a marble over their grave, with this inscription: —

JOSIAH FRANKLIN
And
ABIAH his wife,
Lie here interred.

They lived lovingly together in wedlock
Fifty-five years.

Without an estate, or any gainful employment,
By constant labor and industry,
With God's blessing,
They maintained a large family
Comfortably,
And brought up thirteen children
And seven grandchildren
Reputably.

From this instance, reader,
Be encouraged to diligence in thy calling,
And distrust not Providence.

He was a pious and prudent man;
She, a discreet and virtuous woman.

Their youngest Son,
In filial regard to their memory,
Places this stone.

J. F. born 1655, died 1744, Ætat. 89.
A. F. born 1667, died 1752, —— 85.

By my rambling digressions I perceive myself to be grown old. I used to write more methodically. But one does not dress for private company as for a public ball. 'T is perhaps only negligence.

To return: I continued thus employed in my father's business for two years, that is, till I was twelve years old; and my brother John, who was bred to that business, having left my father, married, and set up for himself at Rhode Island, there was all appearance that I was destined to supply his place, and become a tallow-chandler. But my dislike to the trade continuing, my father was under apprehensions that if he did not find one for me more agreeable, I should break away and get to sea, as his son Josiah had done, to his great vexation. He therefore sometimes took me to walk with him, and

see joiners, bricklayers, turners, braziers, etc., at their work, that he might observe my inclination, and endeavor to fix it on some trade or other on land. It has ever since been a pleasure to me to see good workmen handle their tools, and it has been useful to me, having learned so much by it as to be able to do little jobs myself in my house when a workman could not readily be got, and to construct little machines for my experiments, while the intention of making the experiment was fresh and warm in my mind. My father at last fixed upon the cutler's trade, and my uncle Benjamin's son Samuel, who was bred to that business in London, being about that time established in Boston, I was sent to be with him some time on liking. But his expectations of a fee with me displeasing my father, I was taken home again.

From a child I was fond of reading, and all the little money that came into my hands was ever laid out in books. Pleased with the *Pilgrim's Progress*, my first collection was of John Bunyan's works in separate little volumes. I afterward sold them to enable me to buy R. Burton's *Historical Collections;* they were small chapmen's books, and cheap, forty or fifty in all. My father's little library consisted chiefly of books in polemic divinity, most of which I read, and have since often regretted that, at a time when I had such a thirst for knowledge, more proper books had not fallen in my way, since it was now resolved I should not be a clergyman. Plutarch's *Lives* there was in which I read abundantly, and I still think that time spent to great advantage. There was also a book of De Foe's, called an *Essay on Projects*, and another of Dr. Mather's, called *Essays to do*

Good, which perhaps gave me a turn of thinking that had an influence on some of the principal future events of my life.[1]

This bookish inclination at length determined my father to make me a printer, though he had already one son (James) of that profession. In 1717 my brother James returned from England with a press and letters to set up his business in Boston. I liked it much better than that of my father, but still had a hankering for the sea. To prevent the apprehended effect of such an inclination, my father was impatient to have me bound to my brother. I stood out some time, but at last was persuaded, and signed the indentures when I was yet but twelve years old. I was to serve as an apprentice till I was twenty-one years of age, only I was to be allowed journeyman's wages during the last year. In a little time I made great proficiency in the business, and became a useful hand to my brother. I now had access to better books. An acquaintance with the apprentices of booksellers enabled me sometimes to borrow a small one, which I was careful to return soon and clean. Often I sat up in my room reading the greatest part of the night, when the book was borrowed in the evening and to be returned early in the morning, lest it should be missed or wanted.

And after some time an ingenious tradesman, Mr. Matthew Adams, who had a pretty collection of books, and who frequented our printing-house, took notice of me, invited me to his library, and very kindly lent me

[1] In his 79th year, Franklin wrote to a son of Dr. Mather that the reading of these essays had given him "such a turn of thinking as to have an influence on his conduct through life." S.-IV, 208-9.

such books as I chose to read. I now took a fancy to poetry, and made some little pieces; my brother, thinking it might turn to account, encouraged me, and put me on composing occasional ballads. One was called *The Lighthouse Tragedy*, and contained an account of the

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN, APPRENTICE

After a bronze tablet on the pedestal of Greenough's statue

drowning of Captain Worthilake, with his two daughters; the other was a sailor's song, on the taking of Teach (or Blackbeard), the pirate.[1] They were wretched stuff,

[1] This stanza from a poem supposed to be the original of Franklin's "*Teach*" will illustrate the style of these ballads.

"Will you hear of a bloody Battle,
Lately fought upon the Seas,
It will make your Ears to rattle,
And your Admiration cease;
Have you heard of Teach the Rover,
And his Knavery on the Main;

in the Grub-Street ballad style; and when they were printed he sent me about the town to sell them. The first sold wonderfully, the event being recent, having made a great noise. This flattered my vanity; but my father discouraged me by ridiculing my performances, and telling me verse-makers were generally beggars. So I escaped being a poet, most probably a very bad one; but as prose writing has been of great use to me in the course of my life, and was a principal means of my advancement, I shall tell you how, in such a situation, I acquired what little ability I have in that way.

There was another bookish lad in the town, John Collins by name, with whom I was intimately acquainted. We sometimes disputed, and very fond we were of argument, and very desirous of confuting one another, which disputatious turn, by the way, is apt to become a very bad habit, making people often extremely disagreeable in company by the contradiction that is necessary to bring it into practice; and thence, besides souring and spoiling the conversation, is productive of disgusts and perhaps enmities where you may have occasion for friendship. I had caught it by reading my father's books of dispute about religion. Persons of good sense, I have since observed, seldom fall into it, except lawyers, university men, and men of all sorts that have been bred at Edinborough.

A question was once, somehow or other, started be-

How of Gold he was a Lover,
How he loved all ill got Gain."[1]

[1] Quoted from *The Many-Sided Franklin*, p. 221. The author found a poem which he believed to be the original of Franklin's ballad. It certainly corresponds with his description of the style.

tween Collins and me, of the propriety of educating the female sex in learning, and their abilities for study.[1] He was of opinion that it was improper, and that they were naturally unequal to it. I took the contrary side, perhaps a little for dispute's sake. He was naturally more eloquent, had a ready plenty of words; and sometimes, as I thought, bore me down more by his fluency than by the strength of his reasons. As we parted without settling the point, and were not to see one another again for some time, I sat down to put my arguments in writing, which I copied fair and sent to him. He answered, and I replied. Three or four letters of a side had passed, when my father happened to find my papers and read them. Without entering into the discussion, he took occasion to talk to me about the manner of my writing; observed that, though I had the advantage of my antagonist in correct spelling and pointing (which I owed to the printing-house), I fell far short in elegance of expression, in method, and in perspicuity, of which he convinced me by several instances. I saw the justice of his remarks, and thence grew more attentive to the manner in writing, and determined to endeavor at improvement.

About this time I met with an odd volume of the *Spectator*. It was the third. I had never before seen any of them. I bought it, read it over and over, and was much delighted with it. I thought the writing excellent, and wished, if possible, to imitate it. With this view I took some of the papers, and making short hints

[1] This is one of the topics in Defoe's *Essay on Projects* which the lad Ben had already read.

of the sentiment in each sentence, laid them by a few days, and then, without looking at the book, tried to complete the papers again, by expressing each hinted sentiment at length, and as fully as it had been expressed before, in any suitable words that should come to hand. Then I compared my *Spectator* with the original, discovered some of my faults, and corrected them. But I found I wanted a stock of words, or a readiness in recollecting and using them, which I thought I should have acquired before that time if I had gone on making verses; since the continual occasion for words of the same import, but of different length, to suit the measure, or of different sound for the rhyme, would have laid me under a constant necessity of searching for variety, and also have tended to fix that variety in my mind, and make me master of it. Therefore I took some of the tales and turned them into verse; and, after a time, when I had pretty well forgotten the prose, turned them back again. I also sometimes jumbled my collections of hints into confusion, and after some weeks endeavored to reduce them into the best order, before I began to form the full sentences and complete the paper. This was to teach me method in the arrangement of thoughts. By comparing my work afterwards with the original, I discovered many faults and amended them; but I sometimes had the pleasure of fancying that, in certain particulars of small import, I had been lucky enough to improve the method or the language, and this encouraged me to think I might possibly in time come to be a tolerable English writer, of which I was extremely ambitious. My time for these exercises and for reading

was at night, after work, or before it began in the morning, or on Sundays, when I contrived to be in the printing-house alone, evading as much as I could the common attendance on public worship which my father used to exact of me when I was under his care, and which indeed I still thought a duty, though I could not, as it seemed to me, afford time to practise it.

When about sixteen years of age I happened to meet with a book, written by one Tryon,[1] recommending a vegetable diet. I determined to go into it. My brother, being yet unmarried, did not keep house, but boarded himself and his apprentices in another family. My refusing to eat flesh occasioned an inconveniency, and I was frequently chid for my singularity. I made myself acquainted with Tryon's manner of preparing some of his dishes, such as boiling potatoes or rice, making hasty pudding, and a few others, and then proposed to my brother that if he would give me, weekly, half the money he paid for my board, I would board myself. He instantly agreed to it and I presently found that I could save half what he paid me. This was an additional fund for buying books. But I had another advantage in it. My brother and the rest going from the printing-house to their meals, I remained there alone, and dispatching presently my light repast, which often was no more than a biscuit or a slice of bread, a handful of raisins or a tart from the pastry-cook's, and a glass of water, had the rest of the time till their return for study, in which I made the greater progress, from that greater clearness of head and quicker apprehension which usually attend temperance in eating and drinking.

[1] The second edition of Tryon's book had been published in London, in 1691.

And now it was that, being on some occasion made ashamed of my ignorance in figures, which I had twice failed in learning when at school, I took Cocker's book of Arithmetic, and went through the whole by myself with great ease. I also read Seller's and Shermy's books of Navigation, and became acquainted with the little geometry they contain; but never proceeded far in that science. And I read about this time Locke *On Human Understanding*, and the *Art of Thinking*, by Messrs. du Port Royal.

While I was intent on improving my language, I met with an English Grammar (I think it was Greenwood's), at the end of which there were two little sketches of the arts of rhetoric and logic, the latter finishing with a specimen of a dispute in the Socratic method; and soon after I procured Xenophon's *Memorable Things of Socrates*, wherein there are many instances of the same method. I was charmed with it, adopted it, dropped my abrupt contradiction and positive argumentation, and put on the humble inquirer and doubter. And being then, from reading Shaftesbury and Collins, become a real doubter in many points of our religious doctrine, I found this method safest for myself and very embarrassing to those against whom I used it; therefore I took a delight in it, practised it continually, and grew very artful and expert in drawing people, even of superior knowledge, into concessions, the consequences of which they did not foresee, entangling them in difficulties out of which they could not extricate themselves, and so obtaining victories that neither myself nor my cause always deserved. I continued this method some few years, but

gradually left it, retaining only the habit of expressing myself in terms of modest diffidence; never using, when I advanced anything that may possibly be disputed, the words *certainly*, *undoubtedly*, or any others that give the air of positiveness to an opinion; but rather say, I conceive or apprehend a thing to be so and so; it appears to me, or *I should think it so or so*, for such and such reasons; or *I imagine it to be so;* or *it is so, if I am not mistaken.* This habit, I believe, has been of great advantage to me when I have had occasion to inculcate my opinions, and persuade men into measures that I have been from time to time engaged in promoting; and as the chief ends of conversation are to *inform* or to be *informed*, to *please* or to *persuade*, I wish well-meaning, sensible men would not lessen their power of doing good by a positive, assuming manner, that seldom fails to disgust, tends to create opposition, and to defeat every one of those purposes for which speech was given to us, to wit, giving or receiving information or pleasure. For if you would inform, a positive and dogmatical manner in advancing your sentiments may provoke contradiction and prevent a candid attention. If you wish information and improvement from the knowledge of others, and yet at the same time express yourself as firmly fixed in your present opinions, modest, sensible men who do not love disputation will probably leave you undisturbed in the possession of your error. And by such a manner you can seldom hope to recommend yourself in *pleasing* your hearers, or to persuade those whose concurrence you desire. Pope says, judiciously: —

> "Men should be taught as if you taught them not,
> And things unknown propos'd as things forgot;"

farther recommending to us

"To speak, tho' sure, with seeming diffidence."

And he might have coupled with this line that which he has coupled with another, I think less properly,

"For want of modesty is want of sense."

If you ask, Why less properly? I must repeat the lines, —

"Immodest words admit of no defense,
For want of modesty is want of sense."

Now, is not *want of sense* (where a man is so unfortunate as to want it) some apology for his *want of modesty?* and would not the lines stand more justly thus?

"Immodest words admit *but* this defense,
That want of modesty is want of sense."

This, however, I should submit to better judgments.

My brother had, in 1720 or 1721, begun to print a newspaper. It was the second that appeared in America, and was called the *New England Courant.*[1] The only one before it was the *Boston News-Letter.* I remember his being dissuaded by some of his friends from the undertaking, as not likely to succeed, one newspaper being, in their judgment, enough for America. At this time (1771) there are not less than five-and-twenty. He went on, however, with the undertaking, and after having worked in composing the types and printing off the sheets, I was employed to carry the papers through the streets to the customers.

[1] This was written from recollection, fifty years after the event, and Franklin evidently confused the name of the paper printed by his brother for the postmaster of Boston with the one edited, a little later, in his own office. *The New England Courant* was really the fourth newspaper that appeared in America.

He had some ingenious men among his friends, who amused themselves by writing little pieces for this paper, which gained it credit and made it more in demand, and these gentlemen often visited us. Hearing their conversations, and their accounts of the approbation their papers were received with, I was excited to try my hand among them; but being still a boy, and suspecting that my brother would object to printing anything of mine in his paper if he knew it to be mine, I contrived to disguise my hand, and writing an anonymous paper, I put it in at night under the door of the printing-house. It was found in the morning, and communicated to his writing friends when they called in as usual. They read it, commented on it in my hearing, and I had the exquisite pleasure of finding it met with their approbation, and that in their different guesses at the author, none were named but men of some character among us for learning and ingenuity. I suppose now that I was rather lucky in my judges, and that perhaps they were not really so very good ones as I then esteemed them.

Encouraged, however, by this, I wrote and conveyed in the same way to the press several more papers which were equally approved; and I kept my secret till my small fund of sense for such performances was pretty well exhausted, and then I discovered it, when I began to be considered a little more by my brother's acquaintance, and in a manner that did not quite please him, as he thought, probably with reason, that it tended to make me too vain. And, perhaps, this might be one occasion of the differences that we began to have about this time. Though a brother, he considered himself as my master,

and me as his apprentice, and, accordingly, expected the same services from me as he would from another, while I thought he demeaned me too much in some he required of me, who from a brother expected more indulgence. Our disputes were often brought before our father, and I fancy I was either generally in the right, or else a better pleader, because the judgment was generally in my favor. But my brother was passionate, and had often beaten me, which I took extremely amiss; and, thinking my apprenticeship very tedious, I was continually wishing for some opportunity of shortening it, which at length offered in a manner unexpected.[1]

One of the pieces in our newspaper on some political point, which I have now forgotten, gave offence to the Assembly. He was taken up, censured, and imprisoned for a month, by the speaker's warrant, I suppose, because he would not discover his author. I too was taken up and examined before the council; but, though I did not give them any satisfaction, they contented themselves with admonishing me, and dismissed me, considering me, perhaps, as an apprentice, who was bound to keep his master's secrets.

During my brother's confinement, which I resented a good deal, notwithstanding our private differences, I had the management of the paper; and I made bold to give our rulers some rubs in it, which my brother took very kindly, while others began to consider me in an unfavorable light, as a young genius that had a turn for libelling and satire. My brother's discharge was accompanied with

[1] I fancy his harsh and tyrannical treatment of me might be a means of impressing me with that aversion to arbitrary power that has stuck to me through my whole life. B. F.

an order of the House (a very odd one), that "*James Franklin should no longer print the paper called the New England Courant.*"

There was a consultation held in our printing-house among his friends, what he should do in this case. Some proposed to evade the order by changing the name of the paper; but my brother seeing inconveniences in that, it was finally concluded on as a better way, to let it be printed for the future under the name of BENJAMIN FRANKLIN; and to avoid the censure of the Assembly, that might fall on him as still printing it by his apprentice, the contrivance was that my old indenture should be returned to me, with a full discharge on the back of it, to be shown on occasion, but to secure to him the benefit of my service, I was to sign new indentures for the remainder of the term, which were to be kept private. A very flimsy scheme it was; however, it was immediately executed, and the paper went on, accordingly, under my name for several months.

At length, a fresh difference arising between my brother and me, I took upon me to assert my freedom, presuming that he would not venture to produce the new indentures. It was not fair in me to take this advantage, and this I therefore reckon one of the first errata of my life; but the unfairness of it weighed little with me, when under the impressions of resentment for the blows his passion too often urged him to bestow upon me, though he was otherwise not an ill-natured man: perhaps I was too saucy and provoking.

II. The Run-away Apprentice

1723–1724

Comment. When a boy is separated for the first time from the older persons who have governed his life thus far, he begins to find out of what stuff he is made. If he is careless, there is no one at hand to patch up his mistakes, or make good his losses; if he is ill-tempered, or rude, he must bear the unfriendliness of his companions. Often, the most significant indications of his future character appear in affairs about which he feels most free to follow his own inclination — his friends, how he spends his money, or his leisure hours.

Benjamin Franklin had become a wise old man, when he wrote these memoirs, and he turned a critical eye upon his own early years. Not many times in the history of the world has any great man told frankly and honestly the story of his own youthful follies and mistakes. In Franklin's narrative of his first sojourn in Philadelphia, we have a veracious account of how a boy, equipped with a trade and habits of industry, but with no money and few friends, began life on his own account. The story of these early days of his career is interesting chiefly because it narrates the first experiment in the art of living of a young lad who had thus far shown no remarkable talent and who, either by his own fault or by misfortune, had acquired an undesirable reputation in his native town. Every incident should be scanned closely for what it reveals, indirectly, of the true Ben Franklin, who must now prove whether he is the unpromising lad he was thought in Boston, or another and quite different boy. D.

Franklin's Outline. My leaving him and going to New York (return to eating flesh); thence to Pennsylvania. The journey, and its events on the Bay, at Amboy. The road. Meet with Dr. Brown. His

character. His great work. At Burlington. The Good Woman. On the River. My Arrival at Philadelphia. First Meal and first Sleep. Money left. Employment. Lodging. First acquaintance with my afterward Wife. With J. Ralph. With Keimer. Their characters. Osborne. Watson. The Governor takes notice of me. The Occasion and Manner. His character. Offers to set me up. My return to Boston. Voyage and accidents. Reception. My Father dislikes the proposal. I return to New York and Philadelphia. Governor Burnet. J. Collins. The money for Vernon. The Governor's Deceit. Collins not finding employment goes to Barbados much in my Debt.

When he[1] found I would leave him, he took care to prevent my getting employment in any other printing-house of the town, by going round and speaking to every master, who accordingly refused to give me work. I then thought of going to New York, as the nearest place where there was a printer; and I was rather inclined to leave Boston when I reflected that I had already made myself a little obnoxious to the governing party, and from the arbitrary proceedings of the Assembly in my brother's case, it was likely I might, if I stayed, soon bring myself into scrapes; and further, that my indiscreet disputations about religion began to make me pointed at with horror by good people as an infidel or atheist. I determined on the point, but my father now siding with my brother, I was sensible that if I attempted to go openly, means would be used to prevent me. My friend Collins, therefore, undertook to manage a little for me. He agreed with the captain of a New York sloop for my passage, under the notion of my being a young acquaintance of his who had gotten himself into trouble and therefore could not appear or come away publicly. So I sold some of my books to raise a little money, was taken on

[1] Franklin's brother.

board privately, and as we had a fair wind, in three days I found myself in New York, near 300 miles from home, a boy of but 17, without the least recommendation to, or knowledge of, any person in the place, and with very little money in my pocket.

My inclinations for the sea were by this time worn out, or I might now have gratified them. But, having a trade, and supposing myself a pretty good workman, I offered my service to the printer in the place, old Mr. William Bradford, who had been the first printer in Pennsylvania, but removed from thence upon the quarrel of George Keith. He could give me no employment, having little to do, and help enough already; but says he, "My son at Philadelphia has lately lost his principal hand, Aquila Rose, by death; if you go thither, I believe he may employ you." Philadelphia was a hundred miles further; I set out, however, in a boat for Amboy, leaving my chest and things to follow me round by sea.

In crossing the bay, we met with a squall that tore our rotten sails to pieces, prevented our getting into the Kill,[1] and drove us upon Long Island. In our way, a drunken Dutchman, who was a passenger too, fell overboard; when he was sinking, I reached through the water to his shock pate, and drew him up, so that we got him in again. His ducking sobered him a little, and he went to sleep, taking first out of his pocket a book, which he desired I would dry for him. It proved to be my old favorite author, Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*, in Dutch, finely printed on good paper, with copper cuts, a dress better

[1] This is the Dutch word for a narrow passage, or channel. In 1723, travel was by water wherever possible, for roads were few and bad. The inside passage to Amboy, N. J., was by the Kill lying north and west of Staten Island.

than I had ever seen it wear in its own language. I have since found that it has been translated into most of the languages of Europe, and suppose it has been more generally read than any other book, except perhaps the Bible. Honest John was the first that I know of who mixed narration and dialogue; a method of writing very engaging to the reader, who in the most interesting parts finds himself, as it were, brought into the company and present at the discourse. De Foe in his *Crusoe*, his *Moll Flanders*, *Religious Courtship*, *Family Instructor*, and other pieces, has imitated it with success, and Richardson has done the same in his *Pamela*, etc.

When we drew near the island, we found it was at a place where there could be no landing, there being a great surf on the stony beach. So we dropped anchor, and swung round towards the shore. Some people came down to the water edge and hallooed to us, as we did to them; but the wind was so high, and the surf so loud, that we could not hear so as to understand each other. There were canoes on the shore, and we made signs, and hallooed that they should fetch us; but they either did not understand us, or thought it impracticable, so they went away, and night coming on, we had no remedy but to wait till the wind should abate; and, in the mean time, the boatman and I concluded to sleep, if we could; and so crowded into the scuttle, with the Dutchman, who was still wet; and the spray beating over the head of our boat, leaked through to us, so that we were soon almost as wet as he. In this manner we lay all night, with very little rest; but the wind abating the next day, we made a shift to reach Amboy before night, having been thirty

hours on the water, without victuals, or any drink but a bottle of filthy rum, the water we sailed on being salt.

In the evening I found myself very feverish, and went in to bed; but having read somewhere that cold water drank plentifully was good for a fever, I followed the prescription, sweat plentifully most of the night, my fever left me, and in the morning, crossing the ferry, I proceeded on my journey on foot, having fifty miles to Burlington, where I was told I should find boats that would carry me the rest of the way to Philadelphia.

It rained very hard all the day; I was thoroughly soaked, and by noon a good deal tired; so I stopped at a poor inn, where I stayed all night, beginning now to wish that I had never left home. I cut so miserable a figure, too, that I found, by the questions asked me, I was suspected to be some run-away servant, and in danger of being taken up on that suspicion. However, I proceeded the next day, and got in the evening to an inn, within eight or ten miles of Burlington, kept by one Dr. Brown. He entered into conversation with me while I took some refreshment, and, finding I had read a little, became very sociable and friendly. Our acquaintance continued as long as he lived. He had been, I imagine, an itinerant doctor, for there was no town in England, or country in Europe, of which he could not give a very particular account. He had some letters, and was ingenious, but much of an unbeliever, and wickedly undertook, some years after, to travesty the Bible in doggerel verse, as Cotton had done Virgil. By this means he set many of the facts in a very ridiculous light, and might have hurt weak minds if his work had been published; but it never was.

At his house I lay that night, and the next morning reached Burlington, but had the mortification to find that the regular boats were gone a little before my coming, and no other expected to go before Tuesday, this being Saturday; wherefore I returned to an old woman in the town, of whom I had bought gingerbread to eat on the water, and asked her advice. She invited me to lodge at her house till a passage by water should offer; and being tired with my foot traveling, I accepted the invitation. She, understanding I was a printer, would have had me stay at that town and follow my business, being ignorant of the stock necessary to begin with. She was very hospitable, gave me a dinner of ox-cheek with great good-will, accepting only a pot of ale in return; and I thought myself fixed till Tuesday should come. However, walking in the evening by the side of the river, a boat came by, which I found was going towards Philadelphia, with several people in her. They took me in, and, as there was no wind, we rowed all the way; and about midnight, not having yet seen the city, some of the company were confident we must have passed it, and would row no farther; the others knew not where we were; so we put toward the shore, got into a creek, landed near an old fence, with the rails of which we made a fire, the night being cold, in October, and there we remained till daylight. Then one of the company knew the place to be Cooper's Creek, a little above Philadelphia, which we saw as soon as we got out of the creek, and arrived there about eight or nine o'clock on the Sunday morning, and landed at the Market Street wharf.

I have been the more particular in this description of

my journey, and shall be so of my first entry into that city, that you may in your mind compare such unlikely beginnings with the figure I have since made there. I was in my working-dress, my best clothes being to come round by sea. I was dirty from my journey; my pockets were stuffed out with shirts and stockings, and I knew no soul nor where to look for lodging. I was fatigued with traveling, rowing, and want of rest, I was very hungry; and my whole stock of cash consisted of a Dutch dollar, and about a shilling in copper. The latter I gave the people of the boat for my passage, who at first refused it on account of my rowing; but I insisted on their taking it. A man being sometimes more generous when he has but a little money than when he has plenty, perhaps through fear of being thought to have but little.

Then I walked up the street, gazing about till near the market-house I met a boy with bread. I had made many a meal on bread, and inquiring where he got it, I went immediately to the baker's he directed me to, in Second Street, and asked for biscuit, intending such as we had in Boston; but they, it seems, were not made in Philadelphia. Then I asked for a three-penny loaf, and was told they had none such. So not considering or knowing the difference of money, and the greater cheapness nor the names of his bread, I bade him give me three-penny worth of any sort. He gave me, accordingly, three great puffy rolls. I was surprised at the quantity, but took it, and having no room in my pockets, walked off with a roll under each arm, and eating the other. Thus I went up Market Street as far as Fourth Street, passing by the door of Mr. Read, my future

wife's father; when she, standing at the door, saw me, and thought I made, as I certainly did, a most awkward, ridiculous appearance. Then I turned and went down Chestnut Street and part of Walnut Street, eating my roll all the way, and coming round, found myself again at Market Street wharf, near the boat I came in, to which I went for a draught of the river water; and being

OLD QUAKER MEETING-HOUSE

Corner of Second and Market Streets, Philadelphia. The building at the right, in the middle of the street, is the court house

filled with one of my rolls, gave the other two to a woman and her child that came down the river in the boat with us, and were waiting to go farther.

Thus refreshed, I walked again up the street, which by this time had many clean-dressed people in it, who were all walking the same way. I joined them, and thereby was led into the great meeting-house of the Quakers near the market. I sat down among them, and after looking round awhile and hearing nothing said, being very drowsy through labor and want of rest the preceding night, I fell fast asleep, and continued so till

the meeting broke up, when one was kind enough to rouse me. This was, therefore, the first house I was in or slept in, in Philadelphia.

Walking down again toward the river, and looking in the faces of people, I met a young Quaker man, whose countenance I liked, and, accosting him, requested he would tell me where a stranger could get lodging. We were then near the sign of the Three Mariners. "Here," says he, "is one place that entertains strangers, but it is not a reputable house; if thee wilt walk with me, I 'll show thee a better." He brought me to the Crooked Billet in Water Street. Here I got a dinner; and while I was eating it, several sly questions were asked me, as it seemed to be suspected from my youth and appearance that I might be some run-away.

After dinner, my sleepiness returned, and being shown to a bed, I lay down without undressing, and slept till six in the evening, was called to supper, went to bed again very early, and slept soundly till next morning. Then I made myself as tidy as I could, and went to Andrew Bradford the printer's. I found in the shop the old man his father, whom I had seen at New York, and who, traveling on horseback, had got to Philadelphia before me. He introduced me to his son, who received me civilly, gave me a breakfast, but told me he did not at present want a hand, being lately supplied with one; but there was another printer in town, lately set up, one Keimer, who, perhaps, might employ me; if not, I should be welcome to lodge at his house, and he would give me a little work to do now and then till fuller business should offer.

The old gentleman said he would go with me to the new printer; and when we found him, "Neighbor," says Bradford, "I have brought to see you a young man of your business; perhaps you may want such a one." He asked me a few questions, put a composing stick in my hand to see how I worked, and then said he would employ me soon, though he had just then nothing for me to do; and taking old Bradford, whom he had never seen before, to be one of the town's people that had a good will for him, entered into a conversation on his present undertaking and prospects; while Bradford, not discovering that he was the other printer's father, on Keimer's saying he expected soon to get the greatest part of the business into his own hands, drew him on by artful questions, and starting little doubts, to explain all his views, what interests he relied on, and in what manner he intended to proceed. I, who stood by and heard all, saw immediately that one of them was a crafty old sophister, and the other a mere novice. Bradford left me with Keimer, who was greatly surprised when I told him who the old man was.

Keimer's printing-house, I found, consisted of an old shattered press, and one small, worn-out font of English, which he was then using himself, composing an Elegy on Aquila Rose, before mentioned, an ingenious young man, of excellent character, much respected in the town, clerk of the Assembly, and a pretty poet. Keimer made verses too, but very indifferently. He could not be said to write them, for his manner was to compose them in the types directly out of his head. So there being no copy, but one pair of cases, and the Elegy likely to require all the

letter, no one could help him. I endeavored to put his press (which he had not yet used, and of which he understood nothing) into order fit to be worked with; and promising to come and print off his Elegy as soon as he should have got it ready, I returned to Bradford's, who gave me a little job to do for the present, and there I lodged and dieted.[1] A few days after, Keimer sent for me to print off the Elegy. And now he had got another pair of cases, and a pamphlet to reprint, on which he set me to work.

These two printers I found poorly qualified for their business. Bradford had not been bred to it, and was very illiterate; and Keimer, though something of a scholar, was a mere compositor knowing nothing of presswork. He had been one of the French prophets, and could act their enthusiastic agitations. At this time he did not profess any particular religion, but something of all on occasion; was very ignorant of the world, and had, as I afterward found, a good deal of the knave in his composition. He did not like my lodging at Bradford's while I worked with him. He had a house indeed, but without furniture, so he could not lodge me; but he got me a lodging at Mr. Read's before mentioned, who was the owner of his house; and my chest and clothes being come by this time, I made rather a more respectable appearance in the eyes of Miss Read than I had done when she first happened to see me eating my roll in the street.

I began now to have some acquaintance among the young people of the town that were lovers of reading,

[1] In the eighteenth century, dieted was in common use as an intransitive verb, meaning to feed, or to board (at some named place). — *Oxford Dictionary.*

with whom I spent my evenings very pleasantly; and gaining money by my industry and frugality, I lived very agreeably, forgetting Boston as much as I could, and not desiring that any there should know where I resided except my friend Collins, who was in my secret, and kept it when I wrote him. At length, an incident happened that sent me back again much sooner than I had intended. I had a brother-in-law, Robert Holmes, master of a sloop that traded between Boston and Delaware. He being at Newcastle, forty miles below Philadelphia, heard there of me, and wrote me a letter mentioning the concern of my friends in Boston at my abrupt departure, assuring me of their good-will to me, and that everything would be accommodated to my mind if I would return, to which he exhorted me very earnestly. I wrote an answer to his letter, thanked him for his advice, but stated my reasons for quitting Boston fully and in such a light as to convince him I was not so wrong as he had apprehended.

Sir William Keith, governor of the province, was then at Newcastle, and Captain Holmes, happening to be in company with him when my letter came to hand, spoke to him of me, and showed him the letter. The governor read it, and seemed surprised when he was told my age. He said I appeared a young man of promising parts, and therefore should be encouraged; the printers at Philadelphia were wretched ones; and, if I would set up there, he made no doubt I should succeed; for his part, he would procure me the public business, and do me every other service in his power. This my brother-in-law afterwards told me in Boston, but I knew as yet nothing of it;

when, one day, Keimer and I being at work together near the window, we saw the governor and another gentleman (which proved to be Colonel French of Newcastle), finely dressed, come directly across the street to our house, and heard them at the door.

Keimer ran down immediately, thinking it a visit to him; but the governor inquired for me, came up, and with a condescension and politeness I had been quite unused to made me many compliments, desired to be acquainted with me, blamed me kindly for not having made myself known to him when I first came to the place, and would have me away with him to the tavern, where he was going with Colonel French to taste, as he said, some excellent Madeira. I was not a little surprised, and Keimer stared like a pig poisoned. I went, however, with the governor and Colonel French to a tavern, at the corner of Third Street, and over the Madeira he proposed my setting up my business, laid before me the probabilities of success, and both he and Colonel French assured me I should have their interest and influence in procuring the public business of both governments. On my doubting whether my father would assist me in it, Sir William said he would give me a letter to him, in which he would state the advantages, and he did not doubt of prevailing with him. So it was concluded I should return to Boston in the first vessel, with the governor's letter recommending me to my father. In the mean time the intention was to be kept a secret, and I went on working with Keimer as usual, the governor sending for me now and then to dine with him, a very great honor I thought it, and conversing with me in

the most affable, familiar, and friendly manner imaginable.

About the end of April, 1724, a little vessel offered for Boston. I took leave of Keimer as going to see my friends. The governor gave me an ample letter, saying many flattering things of me to my father, and strongly recommending the project of my setting up at Philadelphia as a thing that must make my fortune. We struck on a shoal in going down the bay, and sprung a leak; we had a blustering time at sea, and were obliged to pump almost continually, at which I took my turn. We arrived safe, however, at Boston in about a fortnight. I had been absent seven months, and my friends had heard nothing of me; for my brother Holmes was not yet returned, and had not written about me. My unexpected appearance surprised the family; all were, however, very glad to see me, and made me welcome, except my brother. I went to see him at his printing-house. I was better dressed than ever while in his service, having a genteel new suit from head to foot, a watch, and my pockets lined with near five pounds sterling in silver. He received me not very frankly, looked me all over, and turned to his work again.

The journeymen were inquisitive where I had been, what sort of a country it was, and how I liked it. I praised it much, and the happy life I led in it; expressing strongly my intention of returning to it; and one of them asking what kind of money we had there, I produced a handful of silver, and spread it before them, which was a kind of raree show they had not been used to, paper being the money of Boston. Then I took an

opportunity of letting them see my watch; and, lastly (my brother still grum and sullen), I gave them a piece of eight[1] to drink, and took my leave. This visit of mine offended him extremely; for, when my mother some time after spoke to him of a reconciliation, and of her wishes to see us on good terms together, and that we might live for the future as brothers, he said I had insulted him in such a manner before his people that he could never forget or forgive it. In this, however, he was mistaken.

My father received the governor's letter with some apparent surprise, but said little of it to me for some days, when Captain Holmes returning he showed it to him, asked him if he knew Keith, and what kind of man he was; adding his opinion that he must be of small discretion to think of setting a boy up in business who wanted yet three years of being at man's estate. Holmes said what he could in favor of the project, but my father was clear in the impropriety of it, and at last gave a flat denial to it. Then he wrote a civil letter to Sir William, thanking him for the patronage he had so kindly offered me, but declining to assist me as yet in setting up, I being, in his opinion, too young to be trusted with the management of a business so important, and for which the preparation must be so expensive.

My friend and companion Collins, who was a clerk in the post-office, pleased with the account I gave him of my new country, determined to go thither also; and,

[1] A Spanish dollar, of eight reals; these coins had a wide circulation through the trade of the Netherlands and the Spanish colonies. The number of Spanish dollars in circulation in the 18th century, indirectly influenced the government of the U. S. to adopt a decimal coin as standard. An American shilling is $\frac{1}{8}$ of a Spanish dollar.

while I waited for my father's determination, he set out before me by land to Rhode Island, leaving his books, which were a pretty collection of mathematics and natural philosophy, to come with mine and me to New York, where he proposed to wait for me.

My father, though he did not approve Sir William's proposition, was yet pleased that I had been able to obtain

GRÆME PARK, RESIDENCE OF SIR WILLIAM KEITH

After a painting in the Collection of the Pennsylvania Historical Society

so advantageous a character from a person of such note where I had resided, and that I had been so industrious and careful as to equip myself so handsomely in so short a time; therefore, seeing no prospect of an accommodation between my brother and me, he gave his consent to my returning again to Philadelphia, advised me to behave respectfully to the people there, endeavor to obtain

the general esteem, and avoid lampooning and libelling, to which he thought I had too much inclination; telling me, that by steady industry and a prudent parsimony I might save enough by the time I was one-and-twenty to set me up; and that, if I came near the matter, he would help me out with the rest. This was all I could obtain, except some small gifts as tokens of his and my mother's love, when I embarked again for New York, now with their approbation and their blessing.

The sloop putting in at Newport, Rhode Island, I visited my brother John, who had been married and settled there some years. He received me very affectionately, for he always loved me. A friend of his, one Vernon, having some money due to him in Pennsylvania, about thirty-five pounds currency, desired I would receive it for him, and keep it till I had his directions what to remit it in. Accordingly, he gave me an order. This afterwards occasioned me a good deal of uneasiness.

At Newport we took in a number of passengers for New York, among which were two young women, companions, and a grave, sensible, matron-like Quaker woman, with her attendants. I had shown an obliging readiness to do her some little services, which impressed her I suppose with a degree of good will toward me; therefore, when she saw a daily growing familiarity between me and the two young women, which they appeared to encourage, she took me aside, and said, "Young man, I am concerned for thee, as thou has no friend with thee, and seems not to know much of the world, or of the snares youth is exposed to; depend upon it, those are very bad women; I can see it in all their actions;

and if thee art not upon thy guard, they will draw thee into some danger; they are strangers to thee, and I advise thee, in a friendly concern for thy welfare, to have no acquaintance with them." As I seemed at first not to think so ill of them as she did, she mentioned some things she had observed and heard that had escaped my notice, but now convinced me she was right. I thanked her for her kind advice, and promised to follow it. When we arrived at New York they told me where they lived, and invited me to come and see them; but I avoided it, and it was well I did; for the next day the captain missed a silver spoon and some other things, that had been taken out of his cabin, and knowing that this couple could not be trusted, he got a warrant to search their lodgings, found the stolen goods, and had the thieves punished. So, though we had escaped a sunken rock, which we scraped upon the passage, I thought this escape of rather more importance to me.

At New York I found my friend Collins, who had arrived there some time before me. We had been intimate from children, and had read the same books together; but he had the advantage of more time for reading and studying, and a wonderful genius for mathematical learning, in which he far outstripped me. While I lived in Boston, most of my hours of leisure for conversation were spent with him, and he continued a sober as well as an industrious lad; was much respected for his learning by several of the clergy and other gentlemen, and seemed to promise making a good figure in life. But, during my absence, he had acquired a habit of sotting with brandy; and I found by his own

account, and what I heard from others, that he had been drunk every day since his arrival at New York, and behaved very oddly. He had gamed, too, and lost his money, so that I was obliged to discharge his lodgings, and defray his expenses to and at Philadelphia, which proved extremely inconvenient to me.

The then governor of New York, Burnet (son of Bishop Burnet),[1] hearing from the captain that a young man, one of his passengers, had a great many books, desired he would bring me to see him. I waited upon him accordingly, and should have taken Collins with me but that he was not sober. The governor treated me with great civility, showed me his library, which was a very large one, and we had a good deal of conversation about books and authors. This was the second governor who had done me the honor to take notice of me; which, to a poor boy like me, was very pleasing.

We proceeded to Philadelphia. I received on the way Vernon's money, without which we could hardly have finished our journey. Collins wished to be employed in some counting-house; but, whether they discovered his dramming by his breath, or by his behavior, though he had some recommendations, he met with no success in any application, and continued lodging and boarding at the same house with me, and at my expense. Knowing I had that money of Vernon's he was continually borrowing of me, still promising repayment as soon as he should be in business. At length he had got so much of it that I was distressed to think what I should do in case of being called on to remit it.

[1] The famous historian of the reign of Queen Anne.

His drinking continued, about which we sometimes quarrelled; for, when a little intoxicated, he was very fractious. Once, in a boat on the Delaware with some other young men, he refused to row in his turn. "I will be rowed home," says he. "We will not row you," says I. "You must, or stay all night on the water," says he, "just as you please." The others said, "Let us row; what signifies it?" But, my mind being soured with his other conduct, I continued to refuse. So he swore he would make me row, or throw me overboard; and coming along, stepping on the thwarts, toward me, when he came up and struck at me, I clapped my hand under his crotch, and, rising, pitched him head-foremost into the river. I knew he was a good swimmer, and so was under little concern about him; but before he could get round to lay hold of the boat, we had with a few strokes pulled her out of his reach; and ever when he drew near the boat, we asked if he would row, striking a few strokes to slide her away from him. He was ready to die with vexation, and obstinately would not promise to row. However, seeing him at last beginning to tire, we lifted him in and brought him home dripping wet in the evening. We hardly exchanged a civil word afterwards, and a West India captain, who had a commission to procure a tutor for the sons of a gentleman at Barbadoes, happening to meet with him, agreed to carry him thither. He left me then, promising to remit me the first money he should receive in order to discharge the debt; but I never heard of him after.

The breaking into this money of Vernon's was one of the first great errata of my life; and this affair showed

that my father was not much out in his judgment when he supposed me too young to manage business of importance. But Sir William, on reading his letter, said he was too prudent. There was great difference in persons; and discretion did not always accompany years, nor was youth always without it. "And since he will not set you up," says he, "I will do it myself. Give me an inventory of the things necessary to be had from England, and I will send for them. You shall repay me when you are able; I am resolved to have a good printer here, and I am sure you must succeed." This was spoken with such an appearance of cordiality that I had not the least doubt of his meaning what he said. I had hitherto kept the proposition of my setting up a secret in Philadelphia, and I still kept it. Had it been known that I depended on the governor, probably some friend, that knew him better, would have advised me not to rely on him, as I afterwards heard it as his known character to be liberal of promises which he never meant to keep. Yet, unsolicited as he was by me, how could I think his generous offers insincere? I believed him one of the best men in the world.

I presented him an inventory of a little printing-house, amounting by my computation to about one hundred pounds sterling. He liked it, but asked me if my being on the spot in England to choose the types, and see that everything was good of the kind, might not be of some advantage. "Then," says he, "when there, you may make acquaintances, and establish correspondences in the book-selling and stationery way." I agreed that this might be advantageous. "Then," says he, "get yourself

ready to go with Annis," which was the annual ship, and the only one at that time usually passing between London and Philadelphia. But it would be some months before Annis sailed, so I continued working with Keimer, fretting about the money Collins had got from me, and in daily apprehensions of being called upon by Vernon, which, however, did not happen for some years after.

I believe I have omitted mentioning that, in my first voyage from Boston, being becalmed off Block Island, our people set about catching cod, and hauled up a great many. Hitherto I had stuck to my resolution of not eating animal food, and on this occasion I considered, with my master Tryon, the taking every fish as a kind of unprovoked murder, since none of them had, or ever could do us any injury that might justify the slaughter. All this seemed very reasonable. But I had formerly been a great lover of fish, and, when this came hot out of the frying-pan, it smelt admirably well. I balanced some time between principle and inclination, till I recollected that, when the fish were opened, I saw smaller fish taken out of their stomachs; then thought I, "If you eat one another, I don't see why we may n't eat you." So I dined upon cod very heartily, and continued to eat with other people, returning only now and then occasionally to a vegetable diet. So convenient a thing it is to be a *reasonable creature*, since it enables one to find or make a reason for everything one has a mind to do.

Keimer and I lived on a pretty good familiar footing, and agreed tolerably well, for he suspected nothing of my setting up. He retained a great deal of his old enthusiasm and loved argumentation. We therefore had

many disputations. I used to work him so with my Socratic method, and trepanned him so often by questions apparently so distant from any point we had in hand, and yet by degrees led to the point, and brought him into difficulties and contradictions, that at last he grew ridiculously cautious, and would hardly answer me the most common question, without asking first, "*What do you intend to infer from that?*" However, it gave him so high an opinion of my abilities in the confuting way, that he seriously proposed my being his colleague in a project he had of setting up a new sect. He was to preach the doctrine, and I was to confound all opponents. When he came to explain with me upon the doctrines, I found several conundrums which I objected to, unless I might have my way a little too, and introduce some of mine.

Keimer wore his beard at full length, because somewhere in the Mosaic law it is said, "*Thou shalt not mar the corners of thy beard.*" He likewise kept the Seventh day, Sabbath; and these two points were essentials with him. I disliked both; but agreed to admit them upon condition of his adopting the doctrine of using no animal food. "I doubt," said he, "my constitution will not bear that." I assured him it would, and that he would be the better for it. He was usually a great glutton, and I promised myself some diversion in half starving him. He agreed to try the practice, if I would keep him company. I did so, and we held it for three months. We had our victuals dressed, and brought to us regularly by a woman in the neighborhood, who had from me a list of forty dishes, to be prepared for us

at different times, in all of which there was neither fish, flesh, nor fowl, and the whim suited me the better at this time from the cheapness of it, not costing us above eighteen pence sterling each per week. I have since kept several Lents most strictly, leaving the common diet for that and that for the common, abruptly without the least inconvenience, so that I think that there is little in the advice of making those changes by easy gradations. I went on pleasantly, but poor Keimer suffered grievously, tired of the project, longed for the flesh-pots of Egypt, and ordered a roast pig. He invited me and two women friends to dine with him; but, it being too soon upon the table, he could not resist the temptation, and ate the whole before we came.

I had made some courtship during this time to Miss Read. I had a great respect and affection for her, and had some reason to believe she had the same for me; but as I was about to take a long voyage, and we were both very young, only a little above eighteen, it was thought most prudent by her mother to prevent our going too far at present, as a marriage, if it was to take place, would be more convenient after my return, when I should be, as I expected, set up in my business. Perhaps, too, she thought my expectations not so well founded as I imagined them to be.

My chief acquaintances at this time were Charles Osborne, Joseph Watson, and James Ralph, all lovers of reading. The two first were clerks to an eminent scrivener or conveyancer in the town, Charles Brogden; the other was clerk to a merchant. Watson was a pious, sensible young man, of great integrity; the others rather

more lax in their principles of religion, particularly Ralph, who as well as Collins, had been unsettled by me, for which they both made me suffer. Osborne was sensible, candid, frank; sincere and affectionate to his friends; but in literary matters, too fond of criticising. Ralph was ingenious, genteel in his manners, and extremely eloquent; I think I never knew a prettier talker. Both of them great admirers of poetry, and began to try their hands in little pieces. Many pleasant walks we four had together on Sundays into the woods, near Schuylkill, where we read to one another, and conferred on what we read.

Ralph was inclined to pursue the study of poetry, not doubting but he might become eminent in it and make his fortune by it, alleging that the best poets must, when they first began to write, make as many faults as he did. Osborne dissuaded him, assured him he had no genius for poetry, and advised him to think of nothing beyond the business he was bred to; that in the mercantile way, though he had no stock, he might by his diligence and punctuality recommend himself to employment as a factor, and in time acquire wherewith to trade on his own account. I approved the amusing one's self with poetry now and then, so far as to improve one's language, but no farther.

On this it was proposed that we should each of us, at our next meeting, produce a piece of our own composing, in order to improve by our mutual observations, criticisms, and corrections. As language and expression were what we had in view, we excluded all considerations of invention by agreeing that the task should be a

version of the eighteenth Psalm, which describes the descent of a Deity. When the time of our meeting drew nigh, Ralph called on me first, and let me know his piece was ready. I told him I had been busy, and having little inclination, had done nothing. He then showed me his piece for my opinion, and I much approved it, as it appeared to me to have great merit. "Now," says he, "Osborne never will allow the least merit in anything of mine, but makes a thousand criticisms out of mere envy. He is not so jealous of you; I wish, therefore, you would take this piece, and produce it as yours; I will pretend not to have had time, and so produce nothing. We shall then see what he will say to it." It was agreed, and I immediately transcribed it, that it might appear in my own hand.

We met; Watson's performance was read; there were some beauties in it, but many defects. Osborne's was read; it was much better; Ralph did it justice; remarked some faults, but applauded the beauties. He himself had nothing to produce. I was backward; seemed desirous of being excused; had not had sufficient time to correct, etc.; but no excuse could be admitted; produce I must. It was read and repeated; Watson and Osborne gave up the contest, and joined in applauding it. Ralph only made some criticisms, and proposed some amendments; but I defended my text. Osborne was against Ralph, and told him he was no better a critic than poet, so he dropped the argument. As they two went home together, Osborne expressed himself still more strongly in favor of what he thought my production; having restrained himself before, as he said, lest I should think it flattery.

"But who would have imagined," said he, "that Franklin had been capable of such a performance; such painting, such force, such fire! He has even improved the original. In his common conversation he seems to have no choice of words; he hesitates and blunders; and yet, good God! how he writes!" When we next met, Ralph discovered the trick we had played him, and Osborne was a little laughed at.

This transaction fixed Ralph in his resolution of becoming a poet. I did all I could to dissuade him from it, but he continued scribbling verses till *Pope* [1] cured him. He became, however, a pretty good prose writer. More of him hereafter. But, as I may not have occasion again to mention the other two, I shall just remark here, that Watson died in my arms a few years after, much lamented, being the best of our set. Osborne went to the West Indies, where he became an eminent lawyer and made money, but died young. He and I had made a serious agreement, that the one who happened first to die should, if possible, make a friendly visit to the other, and acquaint him how he found things in that separate state. But he never fulfilled his promise.

[1] The lines in the *Dunciad* are: —

"Silence, ye wolves! while Ralph to Cynthia howls,
And makes night hideous — answer him, ye owls."

III. Eighteen Months in London

1724–1726

Comment. For Franklin, this first journey to London was another phase of the experimental beginning of life. He was still a boy in years and temperament, with an eager zest for new adventures. His experience, his contact with men had been provincial. In the olden time, when an apprentice had learned his trade he was sent forth to wander for a year in distant lands and practise his handicraft among strangers. This was an apprenticeship to life; from it the journeyman returned a master-workman. Such a *Wanderjahr* Franklin spent in London. His first business was the practice of his trade; he sought work in the best printing houses in the city, and learned the art of printing in all its phases. There, he made friends and formed connections of the greatest use, later, when he established his own shop in America.

In the city, he sought many diversions and inquired eagerly for men of note. His chief characteristics were intense intellectual curiosity, and the appetite for living, in the broad and positive sense. In all this, many traits of character for which Franklin in middle life was remarkable began to manifest themselves, and thus indicated the sort of man the boy was likely to become.

Another important result of Franklin's stay in London is found in the influence of a society older and more cultivated than any in this country upon his ideas and his standards of life. He was in the way of seeing, or meeting, more than one man of note. The natural temper of his mind and his wide reading made him an apt recipient of new ideas, and contact with many men of many minds served to free him in great degree from the prejudices and narrow opinions then prevalent in the colonies. Already a close observer of the man-

ners and practice of whatever persons he happened among, he returned to his own country with much new knowledge of institutions and a broad conception of life. Thus, from the beginning of his career, Franklin's standards of excellence were those of a country far larger, more cultivated, and more cosmopolitan than the small Quaker colony in which he lived. He was also confirmed in a natural tolerance and catholicity of mind. D.

Franklin's Outline. Ralph and I go to England. Disappointment of Governor's Letters. Colonel French his Friend. Cornwallis's Letters. Cabbin. Denham. Hamilton. Arrival in England. Get employment. Ralph not. He is an expense to me. Adventures in England. Write a pamphlet and print 100. Schemes. Lyons. Dr. Pemberton. My diligence, and yet poor through Ralph. My Landlady. Her character. Wygate. Wilkes. Cibber. Plays. Books I borrowed. Preachers I heard. Redmayne. At Watts's. Temperance. Ghost. Conduct and Influence among the Men. Persuaded by Mr. Denham to return with him to Philadelphia and be his clerk.

The governor, seeming to like my company, had me frequently to his house, and his setting me up was always mentioned as a fixed thing. I was to take with me letters recommendatory to a number of his friends, besides the letter of credit to furnish me with the necessary money for purchasing the press and types, paper, etc. For these letters I was appointed to call at different times, when they were to be ready; but a future time was still named. Thus he went on till the ship, whose departure too had been several times postponed, was on the point of sailing. Then, when I called to take my leave and receive the letters, his secretary, Dr. Bard, came out to me and said the governor was extremely busy in writing, but would

be down at Newcastle before the ship, and there the letters would be delivered to me.

Ralph, though married, and having one child, had determined to accompany me in this voyage. It was thought he intended to establish a correspondence, and obtain goods to sell on commission; but I found afterwards, that, through some discontent with his wife's relations, he purposed to leave her on their hands, and never return again. Having taken leave of my friends, and interchanged some promises with Miss Read, I left Philadelphia in the ship, which anchored at Newcastle. The governor was there; but when I went to his lodging, the secretary came to me from him with the civillest message in the world, that he could not then see me, being engaged in business of the utmost importance, but should send the letters to me on board, wished me heartily a good voyage and a speedy return, etc. I returned on board a little puzzled, but still not doubting.

Mr. Andrew Hamilton, a famous lawyer of Philadelphia, had taken passage in the same ship for himself and son, and with Mr. Denham, a Quaker merchant, and Messrs. Onion and Russel, masters of an iron work in Maryland, had engaged the great cabin; so that Ralph and I were forced to take up with a berth in the steerage, and none on board knowing us, were considered as ordinary persons. But Mr. Hamilton and his son (it was James, since governor) returned from Newcastle to Philadelphia, the father being recalled by a great fee to plead for a seized ship; and, just before we sailed, Colonel French coming on board, and showing me great respect, I was more taken notice of, and, with my friend Ralph,

invited by the other gentlemen to come into the cabin, there being now room. Accordingly, we removed thither.

Understanding that Colonel French had brought on board the governor's dispatches, I asked the captain for those letters that were to be under my care. He said all were put into the bag together and he could not then come at them; but, before we landed in England, I should have an opportunity of picking them out; so I was satisfied for the present, and we proceeded on our voyage. We had a sociable company in the cabin, and lived uncommonly well, having the addition of all Mr. Hamilton's stores, who had laid in plentifully. In this passage Mr. Denham contracted a friendship for me that continued during his life. The voyage was otherwise not a pleasant one, as we had a great deal of bad weather.

When we came into the Channel, the captain kept his word with me, and gave me an opportunity of examining the bag for the governor's letters. I found none upon which my name was put as under my care. I picked out six or seven, that, by the handwriting, I thought might be the promised letters, especially as one of them was directed to Basket, the king's printer, and another to some stationer. We arrived in London the 24th of December, 1724. I waited upon the stationer, who came first in my way, delivering the letter as from Governor Keith. "I don't know such a person," says he; but, opening the letter, "Oh! this is from Riddlesden. I have lately found him to be a complete rascal, and I will have nothing to do with him, nor receive any letters from him." So putting the letter into my hand, he turned on his heel and left me to serve some customer. I was surprised to find

these were not the governor's letters; and, after recollecting and comparing circumstances, I began to doubt his sincerity. I found my friend Denham, and opened the whole affair to him. He let me into Keith's character; told me there was not the least probability that he had written any letters for me; that no one, who knew him, had the smallest dependence on him; and he laughed at the notion of the governor's giving me a letter of credit, having, as he said, no credit to give. On my expressing some concern about what I should do, he advised me to endeavor getting some employment in the way of my business. "Among the printers here," said he, "you will improve yourself, and when you return to America, you will set up to greater advantage."

We both of us happened to know, as well as the stationer, that Riddlesden, the attorney, was a very knave. He had half ruined Miss Read's father by persuading him to be bound for him.[1] By this letter it appeared there was a secret scheme on foot to the prejudice of Hamilton (supposed to be then coming over with us); and that Keith was concerned in it with Riddlesden. Denham, who was a friend of Hamilton's, thought he ought to be acquainted with it; so, when he arrived in England, which was soon after, partly from resentment and ill-will to Keith and Riddlesden, and partly from good-will to him, I waited on him, and gave him the letter. He thanked me cordially, the information being of importance to him; and from that time he became my friend, greatly to my advantage afterwards on many occasions.

[1] That is, to become his surety for the payment of a note.

But what shall we think of a governor's playing such pitiful tricks, and imposing so grossly on a poor ignorant boy! It was a habit he had acquired. He wished to please everybody; and, having little to give, he gave expectations. He was otherwise an ingenious, sensible man, a pretty good writer, and a good governor for the people, though not for his constituents, the proprietaries, whose instructions he sometimes disregarded. Several of our best laws were of his planning and passed during his administration.

Ralph and I were inseparable companions. We took lodgings together in Little Britain at three shillings and sixpence a week — as much as we could then afford. He found some relations, but they were poor, and unable to assist him. He now let me know his intentions of remaining in London, and that he never meant to return to Philadelphia. He had brought no money with him, the whole he could muster having been expended in paying his passage. I had fifteen pistoles; so he borrowed occasionally of me to subsist, while he was looking out for business. He first endeavored to get into the playhouse, believing himself qualified for an actor; but Wilkes, to whom he applied, advised him candidly not to think of that employment, as it was impossible he should succeed in it. Then he proposed to Roberts, a publisher in Paternoster Row, to write for him a weekly paper like the *Spectator*, on certain conditions, which Roberts did not approve. Then he endeavored to get employment as a hackney writer, to copy for the stationers and lawyers about the Temple, but could find no vacancy.

I immediately got into work at Palmer's, then a famous printing-house in Bartholomew Close, and here I continued near a year. I was pretty diligent, but spent with Ralph a good deal of my earnings in going to plays and

ENTRANCE TO LITTLE BRITAIN, LONDON

After a sketch in the British Museum

other places of amusement. We had together consumed all my pistoles, and now just rubbed on from hand to mouth. He seemed quite to forget his wife and child, and I, by degrees, my engagements with Miss Read, to whom I never wrote more than one letter, and that was to let her know I was not likely soon to return. This was another of the great errata of my life, which I should wish to correct if I were to live it over again. In fact, by our expenses, I was constantly kept unable to pay my passage.

At Palmer's I was employed in composing for the second edition of Wollaston's *Religion of Nature*. Some of his reasonings not appearing to me well founded, I wrote a little metaphysical piece in which I made remarks on them. It was entitled *A Dissertation on Liberty and Necessity, Pleasure and Pain*. I inscribed it to my friend Ralph; I printed a small number. It occasioned my being more considered by Mr. Palmer as a young man of some ingenuity, though he seriously expostulated with me upon the principles of my pamphlet, which to him appeared abominable. My printing this pamphlet was another erratum. While I lodged in Little Britain, I made an acquaintance with one Wilcox, a bookseller, whose shop was at the next door. He had an immense collection of second-hand books. Circulating libraries were not then in use; but we agreed that, on certain reasonable terms, which I have now forgotten, I might take, read, and return any of his books. This I esteemed a great advantage, and I made as much use of it as I could.

My pamphlet by some means falling into the hands of one Lyons, a surgeon, author of a book entitled *The Infallibility of Human Judgment*, it occasioned an acquaintance between us. He took great notice of me, called on me often to converse on those subjects, carried me to the Horns, a pale-ale house in —— Lane, Cheapside, and introduced me to Dr. Mandeville, author of the *Fable of the Bees*, who had a club there, of which he was the soul, being a most facetious, entertaining companion. Lyons, too, introduced me to Dr. Pemberton,[1] at Batson's Coffee-

[1] Dr. Pemberton was employed by Newton to superintend the publication of some of his works and knew him intimately.

house, who promised to give me an opportunity, some time or other, of seeing Sir Isaac Newton, of which I was extremely desirous; but this never happened.

I had brought over a few curiosities, among which the principal was a purse made of the asbestos, which purifies by fire. Sir Hans Sloane heard of it, came to see me, and invited me to his house in Bloomsbury Square, where he showed me all his curiosities, and persuaded me to let him add that to the number, for which he paid me handsomely.

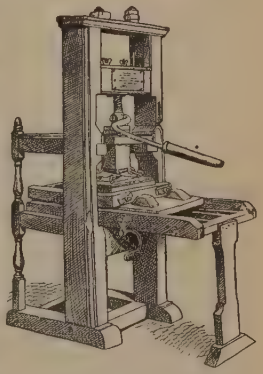
In our house there lodged a young woman, a milliner, who, I think, had a shop in the Cloisters. She had been genteelly bred, was sensible and lively, and of most pleasing conversation. Ralph read plays to her in the evenings. [About this time] he took a resolution of going from London, to try for a country school, which he thought himself well qualified to undertake, as he wrote an excellent hand, and was a master of arithmetic and accounts. This, however, he deemed a business below him, and confident of future better fortune, when he should be unwilling to have it known that he once was so meanly employed, he changed his name, and did me the honor to assume mine; for I soon after had a letter from him, acquainting me that he was settled in a small village (in Berkshire, I think it was, where he taught reading and writing to ten or a dozen boys, at sixpence each per week), recommending Mrs. T—— to my care, and desiring me to write to him, directing for Mr. Franklin, schoolmaster at such a place.

He continued to write frequently, sending me large specimens of an epic poem which he was then composing,

and desiring my remarks and corrections. These I gave him from time to time, but endeavored rather to discourage his proceeding. One of Young's Satires was then just published. I copied and sent him a great part of it, which set in a strong light the folly of pursuing the Muses with any hope of advancement by them. All was in vain; sheets of the poem continued to come by every post. In the mean time an erratum of my own made a serious breach between us; and, when he returned again to London, he let me know he thought I had cancelled all the obligations he had been under to me. So I found I was never to expect his repaying me what I lent to him, or advanced for him. This, however, was not then of much consequence, as he was totally unable; and in the loss of his friendship I found myself relieved from a burden. I now began to think of getting a little money beforehand, and, expecting better work, I left Palmer's to work at Watts's, near Lincoln's Inn Fields, a still greater printing-house. Here I continued all the rest of my stay in London.

At my first admission into this printing-house I took to working at press, imagining I felt a want of the bodily exercise I had been used to in America, where press-work is mixed with composing. I drank only water; the other workmen, near fifty in number, were great guzzlers of beer. On occasion, I carried up and down stairs a large form of types in each hand, when others carried but one in both hands. They wondered to see, from this and several instances, that the *Water-American*, as they called me, was *stronger* than themselves, who drank *strong* beer! We had an alehouse boy who attended

always in the house to supply the workmen. My companion at the press drank every day a pint before breakfast, a pint at breakfast with his bread and cheese, a pint between breakfast and dinner, a pint at dinner, a pint in the afternoon about six o'clock, and another when he had done his day's work. I thought it a detestable custom; but it was necessary, he supposed, to drink *strong* beer, that he might be *strong* to labor. I endeavored to convince him that the bodily strength afforded by beer could only be in proportion to the grain or flour of the barley dissolved in the water of which it was made; that there was more flour in a pennyworth of bread; and therefore, if he would eat that with a pint of water, it would give him more strength than a quart of beer. He drank on, however, and had four or five shillings to pay out of his wages every Saturday night for that muddling liquor; an expense I was free from. And thus these poor devils keep themselves always under.



FRANKLIN'S PRINTING PRESS
In the custody of the Smithsonian Institute

Watts, after some weeks, desiring to have me in the composing-room, I left the pressmen; a new *bien venu* or sum for drink, being five shillings, was demanded of me by the compositors. I thought it an imposition, as I had paid below; the master thought so too, and forbade my paying it. I stood out two or three weeks, was accord-

ingly considered as an excommunicate, and had so many little pieces of private mischief done me, by mixing my sorts, transposing my pages, breaking my matter, etc., etc., if I were ever so little out of the room, and all ascribed to the chapel ghost, which they said ever haunted those not regularly admitted, that, notwithstanding the master's protection, I found myself obliged to comply and pay the money, convinced of the folly of being on ill terms with those one is to live with continually.

I was now on a fair footing with them, and soon acquired considerable influence. I proposed some reasonable alterations in their chapel laws, and carried them against all opposition. From my example, a great part of them left their muddling breakfast of beer, and bread, and cheese, finding they could, with me, be supplied from a neighboring house with a large porringer of hot water-gruel, sprinkled with pepper, crumbed with bread, and a bit of butter in it, for the price of a pint of beer, viz., three half-pence. This was a more comfortable as well as cheaper breakfast, and kept their heads clearer. Those who continued sotting with beer all day were often, by not paying, out of credit at the alehouse, and used to make interest with me to get beer; their *light*, as they phrased it, *being out*. I watched the pay-table on Saturday night, and collected what I stood engaged for them, having to pay sometimes near thirty shillings a week on their accounts. This, and my being esteemed a pretty good *riggite*, that is, a jocular, verbal satirist, supported my consequence in the society. My constant attendance (I never making a St. Monday) recommended me to the master; and my uncommon quickness at composing occa-

sioned my being put upon all work of dispatch, which was generally better paid. So I went on now very agreeably.

My lodging in Little Britain being too remote, I found another in Duke Street, opposite to the Romish chapel. It was two pair of stairs backwards, at an Italian warehouse.[1] A widow lady kept the house; she had a daughter, and a maid servant, and a journeyman who attended the warehouse, but lodged abroad. After sending to inquire my character at the house where I last lodged, she agreed to take me in at the same rate, 3*s.* 6*d.* per week; cheaper, as she said, from the protection she expected in having a man lodge in the house. She was a widow, an elderly woman; had been bred a Protestant, being a clergyman's daughter, but was converted to the Catholic religion by her husband, whose memory she much revered; had lived much among people of distinction, and knew a thousand anecdotes of them as far back as the times of Charles the Second. She was lame in her knees with the gout, and, therefore, seldom stirred out of her room, so sometimes wanted company; and hers was so highly amusing to me, that I was sure to spend an evening with her whenever she desired it. Our supper was only half an anchovy each, on a very little strip of bread and butter, and half a pint of ale between us; but the entertainment was in her conversation. My always keeping good hours, and giving little trouble in the family, made her unwilling to part with me; so that, when I talked of a lodging I had heard of, nearer my business, for two shillings a week, which, intent as I now was on saving money,

[1] A shop for the sale of Italian products, — oil, olives, figs, etc.

made some difference, she bid me not think of it, for she would abate me two shillings a week for the future; so I remained with her at one shilling and sixpence as long as I stayed in London.

In a garret of her house there lived a maiden lady of seventy, in the most retired manner, of whom my landlady gave me this account: that she was a Roman Catholic, had been sent abroad when young, and lodged in a nunnery with an intent of becoming a nun; but, the country not agreeing with her, she returned to England, where, there being no nunnery, she had vowed to lead the life of a nun, as near as might be done in those circumstances. Accordingly, she had given all her estate to charitable uses, reserving only twelve pounds a year to live on, and out of this sum she still gave a great deal in charity, living herself on water-gruel only, and using no fire but to boil it. She had lived many years in that garret, being permitted to remain there gratis by successive Catholic tenants of the house below, as they deemed it a blessing to have her there. A priest visited her to confess her every day. "I have asked her," says my landlady, "how she, as she lived, could possibly find so much employment for a confessor?" "Oh," said she, "it is impossible to avoid *vain thoughts*." I was permitted once to visit her. She was cheerful and polite, and conversed pleasantly. The room was clean, but had no other furniture than a mattress, a table with a crucifix and book, a stool which she gave me to sit on, and a picture over the chimney of Saint Veronica displaying her handkerchief, with the miraculous figure of Christ's bleeding face on it, which she explained to me with great seriousness. She

looked pale, but was never sick; and I give it as another instance on how small an income life and health may be supported.

At Watts's printing-house I contracted an acquaintance with an ingenious young man, one Wygate, who, having wealthy relations, had been better educated than most printers; was a tolerable Latinist, spoke French, and loved reading. I taught him and a friend of his to swim at twice going into the river, and they soon became good swimmers. They introduced me to some gentlemen from the country, who went to Chelsea by water to see the College and Don Saltero's curiosities. In our return, at the request of the company, whose curiosity Wygate had excited, I stripped and leaped into the river, and swam from near Chelsea to Blackfriar's,[1] performing on the way many feats of activity, both upon and under water, that surprised and pleased those to whom they were novelties.

I had from a child been ever delighted with this exercise, had studied and practised all Thevenot's motions and positions, added some of my own, aiming at the graceful and easy as well as the useful. All these I took this occasion of exhibiting to the company, and was much flattered by their admiration; and Wygate, who was desirous of becoming a master, grew more and more attached to me on that account, as well as from the similarity of our studies. He at length proposed to me travelling all over Europe together, supporting ourselves everywhere by working at our business. I was once inclined to it; but, mentioning it to my good friend Mr.

[1] Blackfriars Bridge, a distance, on the river, of about three miles.

Denham, with whom I often spent an hour when I had leisure, he dissuaded me from it, advising me to think only of returning to Pennsylvania, which he was now about to do.

I must record one trait of this good man's character. He had formerly been in business at Bristol, but failed in debt to a number of people, compounded and went to America. There, by a close application to business as a merchant, he acquired a plentiful fortune in a few years. Returning to England in the ship with me, he invited his old creditors to an entertainment, at which he thanked them for the easy composition they had favored him with, and, when they expected nothing but the treat, every man at the first remove found under his plate an order on a banker for the full amount of the unpaid remainder with interest.

He now told me he was about to return to Philadelphia, and should carry over a great quantity of goods in order to open a store there. He proposed to take me over as his clerk, to keep his books, in which he would instruct me, copy his letters, and attend the store. He added that, as soon as I should be acquainted with mercantile business, he would promote me by sending me with a cargo of flour and bread, etc., to the West Indies, and procure me commissions from others which would be profitable; and if I managed well, would establish me handsomely. The thing pleased me; for I was grown tired of London, remembered with pleasure the happy months I had spent in Pennsylvania, and wished again to see it; therefore I immediately agreed on the terms of fifty pounds a year, Pennsylvania money; less, in-

deed, than my present gettings as a compositor, but affording a better prospect.

I now took leave of printing, as I thought, forever, and was daily employed in my new business, going about with Mr. Denham among the tradesmen to purchase various articles, and seeing them packed up, doing errands, calling upon workmen to dispatch, etc.; and when all was on board, I had a few days' leisure. On one of these days, I was, to my surprise, sent for by a great man I knew only by name, a Sir William Wyndham, and I waited upon him. He had heard by some means or other of my swimming from Chelsea to Blackfriar's, and of my teaching Wygate and another young man to swim in a few hours. He had two sons, about to set out on their travels; he wished to have them first taught swimming, and proposed to gratify me handsomely if I would teach them. They were not yet come to town, and my stay was uncertain, so I could not undertake it; but from this incident, I thought it likely that, if I were to remain in England and open a swimming-school, I might get a good deal of money; and it struck me so strongly that, had the overture been sooner made me, probably I should not so soon have returned to America. After many years, you and I had something of more importance to do with one of these sons of Sir William Wyndham, become Earl of Egremont, which I shall mention in its place.

Thus I spent about eighteen months in London; most part of the time I worked hard at my business, and spent but little upon myself except in seeing plays and in books. My friend Ralph had kept me poor; he owed

me about twenty-seven pounds, which I was now never likely to receive; a great sum out of my small earnings! I loved him, notwithstanding, for he had many amiable qualities. I had by no means improved my fortune; but I had picked up some very ingenious acquaintances, whose conversation was of great advantage to me; and I had read considerably.

We sailed from Gravesend on the 23d of July, 1726. For the incidents of the voyage, I refer you to my Journal, where you will find them all minutely related. Perhaps the most important part of that journal is the *plan* to be found in it which I formed at sea, for regulating my future conduct in life. It is the more remarkable, as being formed when I was so young, and yet being pretty faithfully adhered to quite through to old age.

IV. Extracts from "Journal of a Voyage from London to Philadelphia"

Written in 1726

Comment. It was evidently Franklin's intention that the Journal written on the return voyage should form a part of the narrative of his life; or, if he should live to revise and conclude the *Autobiography* with the aid of his papers, should serve as material for some paragraphs to be inserted in this place. The Journal was printed by the grandson of the writer, W. T. Franklin, from a copy made in 1787, before Franklin's death. In itself, this piece of writing is possibly more remarkable than the *Autobiography*, for an old man invariably remembers his youth in the light of later experience, but these pages come to us as they were written by Franklin in his twentieth year. This is important, for they contain evidence of habits of observation and study far beyond any to be inferred from the incidents narrated in the *Autobiography*. The lad had already begun to compare the statements read in books with facts as he observed them, and manifested the same lively interest in the phenomena of nature which led him in the end to a position of honor among the foremost scientists of his age.

This Journal also shows that he had already formed a habit of reflecting upon the conduct of his companions and of drawing conclusions from these observations, which for him took the place of moral precepts. This habit was characteristic of the man in later years, and to it may be traced his shrewd understanding of human nature, and his wisdom in the conduct of his own relations with men, in times that especially tried the judgment.

But if there were no other reason for including parts of this

Journal in the *Autobiography* the excellence of the composition and the style in which it is written would be sufficient. It would be hard, indeed, even in this age of schools and libraries, when books and instruction may be had for the seeking, to find any lad of twenty who had already, for ten years, earned his own livelihood, able and inclined to compose for pleasure, or improvement, an equal number of pages ; it would be even more remarkable to find them readable and full of interest. This Journal should be read as a measure of the boy of twenty ; it should be estimated by his power of description, his skill in making a pleasing narrative out of the incidents of his life, and also by the accuracy and fulness of detail in the information he gives, or the observations made. Especially, indirect testimony should be taken from it of the nature of Franklin's mind, and of his character, at twenty. D.

Journal of occurrences in my Voyage to Philadelphia on board the Berkshire, Henry Clark, Master, from London.[1]

Friday, July 22d, 1726. — Yesterday in the afternoon we left London, and came to an anchor off Gravesend about eleven at night. I lay ashore all night, and this morning took a walk up to Windmill Hill, from whence I had an agreeable prospect of the country for above twenty miles round, and two or three reaches of the river, with ships and boats sailing both up and down, and Tilbury Fort on the other side, which commands the river and passage to London. This Gravesend is a *cursed biting* place; the chief dependence of the people being the advantage they make by imposing upon strangers. If you buy anything of them, and give half

[1] There is a transcript of this Journal in the Library of Congress. The spelling, use of capitals, etc., is Franklin's, and in accordance with common use at the time the Journal was written.

what they ask, you pay twice as much as the thing is worth. Thank God, we shall leave it to-morrow.

Sunday, July 24th. — This morning we weighed anchor, and coming to the Downs, we set our pilot ashore at Deal, and passed through. And now, whilst I write this, sitting upon the quarterdeck, I have methinks one of the pleasantest scenes in the world before me. 'Tis a fine, clear day, and we are going away before the wind with an easy, pleasant gale. We have near fifteen sail of ships in sight, and I may say in company. On the left hand appears the coast of France at a distance, and on the right is the town and castle of Dover, with the green hills and chalky cliffs of England, to which we must now bid farewell. Albion, farewell!

Wednesday, July 27. — This morning, the wind blowing very hard at West, we stood in for the land, in order to make some harbour. About noon we took on board a pilot out of a fishing shallop, who brought the ship into Spithead, off Portsmouth. The captain, Mr. Denham, and myself went on shore, and, during the little time we stayed, I made some observations on the place.

Portsmouth has a fine harbour. The entrance is so narrow, that you can throw a stone from Fort to Fort; yet it is near ten fathom deep, and bold close to; but within there is room enough for five hundred, or, for aught I know, a thousand sail of ships. The town is strongly fortified, being encompassed with a high wall and a deep and broad ditch, and two gates, that are entered over drawbridges; besides several forts, batteries of large cannon, and other outworks, the names of which I know not, nor had I time to take so strict a view as to be able

to describe them. In war time, the town has a garrison of 10,000 men ; but at present 'tis only manned by about 100 Invalids. Notwithstanding the English have so many fleets of men-of-war at sea at this time, I counted in this harbour above thirty sail of 2nd, 3rd, and 4th Rates, that lay by unrigged, but easily fitted out upon occasion, all their masts and rigging marked and numbered in storehouses at hand. The King's yards and docks employ abundance of men, who, even in peace time, are constantly building and refitting men-of-war for the King's service.

Gosport lies opposite to Portsmouth, and is near as big, if not bigger; but, except the fort at the mouth of the harbour, and a small outwork before the main street of the town, it is only defended by a mud wall, which surrounds it, and a trench or dry ditch of about ten feet depth and breadth. Portsmouth is a place of very little trade in peace time ; it depending chiefly on fitting out men-of-war. Spithead is the place where the fleet commonly anchor, and is a very good riding-place. The people of Portsmouth tell strange stories of the severity of one *Gibson*, who was governor of this place in the Queen's time, to his soldiers, and show you a miserable dungeon by the town gate, which they call *Johnny Gibson's Hole*, where, for trifling misdemeanors, he used to confine his soldiers till they were almost starved to death. It is a common maxim, that, without severe discipline, 'tis impossible to govern the licentious rabble of the soldiery. I own, indeed, that if a commander finds he has not those qualities in him that will make him beloved by his people, he ought, by all means, to make

use of such methods as will make them fear him, since one or the other (or both) is absolutely necessary; but Alexander and Cæsar, those renowned generals, received more faithful service, and performed greater actions, by means of the love their soldiers bore them, than they could possibly have done, if, instead of being loved and respected, they had been hated and feared by those they commanded.

Thursday, July 28. — This morning we came on board, having lain on shore all night. We weighed anchor and with a moderate gale, stood in for Cowes, in the Isle of Wight, and came to an anchor before the town about eleven o'clock. Six of the passengers went on shore, and diverted themselves till about 12 at night; and then got a boat, and came on board again, expecting to sail early in the morning.

Friday, July 29. — But the wind continuing adverse still, we went ashore again this morning, and took a walk to Newport, which is about four miles distant from Cowes, and is the metropolis of the island. Thence we walked to Carisbrooke, about a mile further, out of curiosity to see that castle, which King Charles the First was confined in; and so returned to Cowes in the afternoon, and went on board in expectation of sailing.

Cowes is but a small town, and lies close to the seaside, pretty near opposite to Southampton on the main shore of England. It is divided into two parts by a small river that runs up within a quarter of a mile of Newport, and is distinguished by East and West Cowes. There is a fort built in an oval form, on which there are eight or ten guns mounted for the defence of the road. They have a

post-office, a custom-house, and a chappel of ease. And a good harbour for ships to ride in in easterly and westerly winds.

All this afternoon I spent agreeably enough at the draft-board. It is a game I much delight in; but it requires a clear head, and undisturbed; and the persons playing, if they would play well, ought not much to regard the consequence of the game, for that diverts and withdraws the attention of the mind from the game itself, and makes the player liable to make many false open moves; and I will venture to lay it down for an infallible rule, that, if two persons equal in judgment play for a considerable sum, he that loves money most shall lose; his anxiety for the success of the game confounds him. Courage is almost as requisite for the good conduct of this game as in a real battle; for, if the player imagines himself opposed by one that is much his superior in skill, his mind is so intent on the defensive part, that an advantage passes unobserved.

Newport makes a pretty prospect enough from the hills that surround it; (for it lies down in a bottom). The houses are beautifully intermixed with trees, and a tall, old-fashioned steeple rises in the midst of the town, which is very ornamental to it. The name of the church I could not learn; but there is a very neat market-house, paved with square stone, and consisting of eleven arches. There are several pretty handsome streets, and many well-built houses and shops, well stored with goods. But I think that Newport is chiefly remarkable for oysters, which they send to London and other places, where they are very much esteemed, being thought the best in England.

The oyster-merchants fetch them, as I am informed, from other places, and lay them upon certain beds of the river (the water of which is it seems excellently adapted for that purpose) a-fattening; and when they have lain a suitable time they are taken up again, and made fit for sale.

When we came to Carisbrooke, which, as I said before, is a little village about a mile beyond Newport, we took a view of an ancient church that had formerly been a priory in Romish times, and is the first church, or the mother-church, of the island. It is an elegant building, after the old Gothic manner, with a very high tower, and looks very venerable in its ruins. There are several ancient monuments about it; but the stone of which they are composed is of such a soft, crumbling nature, that the inscriptions are none of them legible. Of the same stone are almost all the tombstones, &c., that I observed in the island.

From this church, (having crossed over the brook that gives the name to the village, and got a little boy for a guide,) we went up a very steep hill, through several narrow lanes and avenues, till we came to the castle gate. We entered over the ditch (which is now almost filled up, partly by the ruins of the mouldering walls that have tumbled into it, and partly by the washing down of the earth from the hill by the rains,) upon a couple of brick arches, where I suppose formerly there was a drawbridge. An old woman who lives in the castle, seeing us strangers walk about, sent and offered to show us the rooms if we pleased, which we accepted. This castle, as she informed us, has for many years been the seat of the gov-

ernors of the island; and the rooms and hall, which are very large and handsome, with high, arched roofs, have all along been kept handsomely furnished, every succeeding governor buying the furniture of his predecessor; but, Cadogan, the last governor, who succeeded General Webb, refusing to purchase it, Webb stripped it clear of all, even the hangings, and left nothing but bare walls. The floors are several of them plaster of Paris, the art of making which, the woman told us, was now lost.

The castle stands upon a very high and steep hill, and there are the remains of a deep ditch round it; the walls are thick, and seemingly well-contrived; and certainly it has been a very strong hold in its time, at least before the invention of great guns. There are several breeches in the ruinous walls, which are never repaired, (I suppose they are purposely neglected,) and the ruins are almost everywhere overspread with ivy. It is divided into the lower and the upper castle, the lower enclosing the upper, which is of a round form, and stands upon a promontory, to which you must ascend by near an hundred steps; this upper castle was designed for a retreat in case the lower castle should be won, and is the least ruinous of any part except the stairs before mentioned, which are so broken and decayed, that I was almost afraid to come down again when I was up, they being but narrow, and no rails to hold by.

From the battlements of this upper castle, (which they call the *Coop*,) you have a fine prospect of the greatest part of the island, of the sea on one side, of Cowes road at a distance, and of Newport as it were just below you.

There is a well in the middle of the Coop, which they call the bottomless well, because of its great depth, but it is now half filled up with stones and rubbish, and is covered with two or three loose planks; yet a stone, as we tried, is near a quarter of a minute in falling before you hear it strike. But the well that supplies the inhabitants at present with water is in the lower castle, and is

Carisbrooke Castle

thirty fathoms deep. They draw their water with a great wheel, and with a bucket that holds near a barrel. It makes a great sound if you speak in it, and echoed the flute which we played over it very sweetly. There are but seven pieces of ordnance mounted upon the walls, and those in no very good order; and the old man, who is the gunner and keeper of the castle, and who sells ale at a little house at the gate, has in his possession but six muskets, (which hung up at his wall,) and one of them wants a lock. He told us that the castle, which had now been built 1203 years, was first founded by one Whitgert,

a Saxon, who conquered the island, and that it was called Whitgertsburg for many years.

That particular piece of building, which King Charles lodged in during his confinement here, is suffered to go entirely to ruin, there being nothing standing but the walls. The island is about sixty miles in circumference, and produces plenty of corn and other provisions, and wool as fine as Cotswold; its militia having the credit of equalling the soldiery, and being the best disciplined in England. —— was once, in King William's time, entrusted with the government of this island. At his death it appeared he was a great villain, and a great politician; there was no crime so damnable which he would stick at in the execution of his designs, and yet he had the art of covering all so thick, that with almost all men in general, while he lived, he passed for a saint. What surprised me was, that the silly old fellow, the keeper of the castle, who remembered him governor, should have so true a notion of his character as I perceived he had. In short, I believe it is impossible for a man, though he has all the cunning of a devil, to live and die a villain, and yet conceal it so well as to carry the name of an honest fellow to the grave with him, but some one, by some accident or other, shall discover him. Truth and sincerity have a certain distinguishing native lustre about them, which cannot be perfectly counterfeited; they are like fire and flame, that cannot be painted.

Saturday, *July* 30*th*. — This morning about eight o'clock we weighed anchor, and turned to windward till we came to Yarmouth, another little town upon this island, and there cast anchor again, the wind blowing

hard, and still westerly. Yarmouth is a smaller town than Cowes; yet, the buildings being better, it makes a handsomer prospect at a distance, and the streets are clean and neat. . . .

Having taken a view of the church, town, and fort, on which there are seven large guns mounted, three of us took a walk up further into the island; and, having gone about two miles, we headed a creek that runs up one end of the town, and then went to Freshwater Church, about a mile nearer the town, but on the other side of the creek. Having stayed here some time it grew dark, and my companions were desirous to be gone, lest those whom we had left drinking where we dined in the town should go on board and leave us. We were told, that it was our best way to go strait down to the mouth of the creek, and that there was a ferry boy that would carry us over to the town. But when we came to the house the lazy whelp was in bed, and refused to rise and put us over; upon which we went down to the water-side, with a design to take his boat, and go over by ourselves. We found it very difficult to get the boat, it being fastened to a stake, and the tide risen near fifty yards beyond it; I stripped all to my shirt to wade up to it, but missing the causeway, which was under water, I got up to my middle in mud. At last I came to the stake; but, to my great disappointment, found she was locked and chained. I endeavored to draw the staple with one of the thole-pins, but in vain; I tried to pull up the stake, but to no purpose; so that, after an hour's fatigue and trouble in the wet mud, I was forced to return without the boat.

We had no money in our pockets, and therefore began

to conclude to pass the night in some haystack, though the wind blew very cold and very hard. In the midst of these troubles one of us recollected that he had a horse-shoe in his pocket, which he found in his walk, and asked me if I could not wrench the staple out with that. I took it, went, tried, succeeded, and brought the boat ashore to them. Now we rejoiced and all got in, and, when I had dressed myself, we put off. But the worst of all our troubles was to come yet; for, it being high water and the tide over all the banks, though it was moonlight we could not discern the channel of the creek; but, rowing heedlessly straight forward, when we were got about half way over, we found ourselves aground upon a mud bank; and, striving to row her off by putting our oars in the mud, we broke one and there stuck fast, not having four inches water. We were now in the utmost perplexity, not knowing what in the world to do; we could not tell whether the tide was rising or falling; but at length we plainly perceived it was ebb; and we could feel no deeper water within the reach of our oar.

It was hard to lie in an open boat all night exposed to the wind and weather; but it was worse to think how foolish we should look in the morning, when the owner of the boat should catch us in that condition, where we must be exposed to the view of all the town. After we had strove and struggled for half an hour and more, we gave all over, and sat down with our hands before us, despairing to get off; for, if the tide had left us, we had been never the nearer; we must have sat in the boat, as the mud was too deep for us to walk ashore through it, being up to our necks. At last we bethought ourselves

of some means of escaping, and two of us stripped and got out, and thereby lightening the boat, we drew her upon our knees near fifty yards into deeper water; and then without much ado, having but one oar, we got safe ashore under the fort; and, having dressed ourselves and tied the man's boat, we went with great joy to the Queen's Head, where we left our companions, whom we found waiting for us, though it was very late. Our boat being gone on board, we were obliged to lie ashore all night; and thus ended our walk.

Sunday, *July* 31. — This morning the wind being moderated, our pilot designed to weigh, and, taking advantage of the tide, get a little further to windward. Upon which the boat came ashore, to hasten us on board. We had no sooner returned and hoisted our boat, but the wind began again to blow very hard at west, insomuch that, instead of going any further, we were obliged to weigh and run down again to Cowes for the sake of more secure riding, where we came to an anchor again in a very little time; and the pudding, which our mess made and put into the pot at Yarmouth, we dined upon at Cowes. . . .

Friday, *August* 5. — Called up this morning and hurried aboard, the wind being Northwest. About noon we weighed and left Cowes the third time, and, sailing by Yarmouth, we came into the channel through the needles; which passage is guarded by Hurst Castle, standing on a spit of Land which runs out from the main land of England within a mile of the Isle of Wight. Towards night the wind veered to the Westward, which put us under apprehensions of being forced into port

again: but presently after it fell a flat calm, and then we had a small breeze that was fair for half an hour, when it was succeeded by a calm again.

Saturday, *August* 6.—This morning we had a fair breeze for some hours, and then a calm that lasted all day. In the afternoon I leaped overboard and swam round the ship to wash myself. Saw several porpoises this day. About eight o'Clock we came to an anchor in forty fathom water against the tide of flood, somewhere below Portland, and weighed again about eleven, having a small breeze. . . .

Friday, *August* 19.—This day we have had a pleasant breeze at East. In the morning we spied a sail upon our larboard bow, about two leagues' distance. About noon she put out English colours, and we answered with our ensign, and in the afternoon we spoke with her. She was a ship, of New York, Walter Kippen, Master, bound from Rochelle, in France, to Boston, with salt. Our captain and Mr. D—— went on board, and stayed till evening, it being fine weather. Yesterday, complaints being made that Mr. G—n, one of the passengers, had, with a fraudulent design, marked the cards, a court of justice was called immediately, and he was brought to his trial in form. A Dutchman, who could speak no English, deposed by his interpreter that, when our mess was on shore at Cowes, the prisoner at the bar marked all the Court cards on the back with a pen.

I have sometimes observed, that we are apt to fancy the person that cannot speak intelligibly to us, proportionably stupid in understanding, and, when we speak two or three words in English to a foreigner, it is louder

than ordinary, as if we thought him deaf, and that he had lost the use of his ears as well as his tongue. Something like this I imagine might be the case of Mr. G—n; he fancied the Dutchman could not see what he was about, because he could not understand English, and therefore boldly did it before his face.

The evidence was plain and positive; the prisoner could not deny the fact, but replied in his defence, that the cards he marked were not those we commonly played with, but an imperfect pack, which he afterwards gave to the cabbin-boy. The attorney-general observed to the court, that it was not likely he should take the pains to mark the cards without some ill design, or some further intention than just to give them to the boy when he had done, who understood nothing at all of cards. But another evidence being called deposed that he saw the prisoner in the main-top one day, when he thought himself unobserved, marking a pack of cards on the backs, some with the print of a dirty thumb, others with the top of his finger, &c. Now, there being but two packs on board, and the prisoner having just confessed the marking of one, the Court perceived the case was plain. In fine the jury brought him in guilty, and he was condemned to be carried up to the round-top, and made fast there, in view of all the ship's company, during the space of three hours, that being the place where the act was committed, and to pay a fine of two bottles of brandy. But the prisoner resisting authority and refusing to submit to punishment, one of the sailors stepped up aloft and let down a rope to us, which we, with much struggling, made fast about his middle, and hoisted him up in the air, sprawl-

ing, by main force. We let him hang, cursing and swearing, for near a quarter of an hour; but at length, he crying out Murder! and looking black in the face, the rope being overtort about his middle, we thought proper to let him down again; and our mess have excommunicated him till he pays his fine, refusing either to play, eat, drink, or converse with him. . . .

Thursday, August 25. — Our excommunicated shipmate thinking proper to comply with the sentence the court passed upon him, and expressing himself willing to pay the fine, we have this morning received him into unity again. Man is a sociable being, and it is, for aught I know, one of the worst of punishments to be excluded from Society. I have read abundance of fine things on the subject of solitude, and I know 't is a common boast in the mouths of those that affect to be thought wise, *that they are never less alone than when alone.* I acknowledge solitude an agreeable refreshment to a busy mind; but were these thinking people obliged to be always alone, I am apt to think they would quickly find their very being insupportable to them. I have heard of a gentleman, who underwent seven years' close confinement, in the Bastile, at Paris. He was a man of sense, he was a thinking man, but being deprived of all conversation, to what purpose should he think; for he was denied even the instruments of expressing his thoughts in writing. There is no burden so grievous to man as time he knows not how to dispose of. He was forced at last to have recourse to this invention; He daily scattered pieces of paper about the floor of his little room, and then employed himself in picking them up again and sticking them in rows and figures on

the arm of his elbow-chair; and he used to tell his friends, after his release, that he verily believed, if he had not taken this method he should have lost his senses. One of the philosophers, I think it was Plato, used to say, that he had rather be the veriest stupid block in nature, than the possessor of all knowledge without some intelligent being to communicate it to.

What I have said may in a measure account for some particulars in my present way of living here on board. Our company is in general very unsuitably mixed, to keep up the pleasure and spirit of conversation: and, if there are one or two pair of us that can sometimes entertain one another for half an hour agreeably, yet perhaps we are seldom in the humour for it together. I rise in the morning and read for an hour or two, perhaps, and then reading grows tiresome. Want of exercise occasions want of appetite, so that eating and drinking afford but little pleasure. I tire myself with playing at Draughts, then I go to cards: nay, there is no play so trifling or childish, but we fly to it for entertainment. A contrary wind, I know not how, puts us all out of good humour; we grow sullen, silent, and reserved, and fret at each other upon every little occasion. 'T is a common opinion among the ladies, that if a man is ill-natured he infallibly discovers it when he is in liquor. But I who have known many instances to the contrary, will teach them a more effectual method to discover the natural temper and disposition of their humble servants. Let the ladies make one long sea-voyage with them, and, if they have the least spark of ill-nature in them, and conceal it to the end of the voyage, I will forfeit all my pretensions to their favour. The wind continues fair. . . .

Wednesday, Sept. 14. — This afternoon, about two o'clock, it being fair weather and almost calm, as we sat playing drafts upon deck, we were surprised by a sudden and unusual darkness of the sun, which, as we could perceive, was only covered with a small, thin cloud; when that was passed by, we discovered that that glorious luminary laboured under a very great eclipse. At least ten parts of twelve of him were hid from our eyes, and we were apprehensive he would have been totally darkened. . . .

Sunday, September 18*th.* — We have had the finest weather imaginable all this day, accompanied with what is still more agreeable, a fair wind. Every one puts on a clean shirt and a cheerful countenance, and we begin to be very good company. Heaven grant that this favourable gale may continue! for we have had so much of turning to windward, that the word helm-a-lee is become almost as disagreeable to our ears as the sentence of the judge to a convicted malefactor.

Monday, September 19. — The weather looks a little uncertain, and we begin to fear the loss of our fair wind. We see Tropic birds every day, sometimes five or six together; they are about as big as pigeons.

Tuesday, September 20. — The wind is now westerly again, to our great mortification; and we are come to an allowance of bread, two biscuits and a half a day.

Wednesday, Sept. 21. — This morning our steward was brought to the geers and whipped, for making an extravagant use of flour in the puddings, and for several other misdemeanors. It has been perfectly calm all this day, and very hot. I was determined to wash myself in the sea

to-day, and should have done so, had not the appearance of a Shark, that mortal enemy to swimmers, deterred me; he seemed to be about five feet long, moves round the ship at some distance, in a slow, majestic manner, attended by nearly a dozen of those they call Pilot-fish, of different sizes; the largest of them is not so big as a small mackerell, and the smallest not bigger than my little finger. Two of these diminutive Pilots keep just before his nose, and he seems to govern himself in his motions by their direction; while the rest surround him on every side indifferently. A shark is never seen without a retinue of these, who are his purveyors, discovering and distinguishing his prey for him; while he in turn gratefully protects them from the ravenous, hungry dolphin. They are commonly counted a very greedy fish; yet this refuses to meddle with the bait thrown out for him. 'T is likely he has already made a full meal. . . .

Friday, September 23rd. — This morning we spied a sail to windward of us about two leagues. We showed our jack upon the ensign-staff, and shortened sail for them till noon, when she came up with us. She was a snow, from Dublin, bound for New York, having upwards of fifty servants on board of both sexes; they all appeared upon deck, and seemed very much pleased at the sight of us. There is really something strangely chearing to the spirits in the meeting of a ship at sea, containing a society of creatures of the same species and in the same circumstances with ourselves, after we had been long separated and excommunicated as it were from the rest of mankind. My heart fluttered in my breast with joy, when I saw so many human countenances, and I

could scarce refrain from that kind of laughter, which proceeds from some degree of inward pleasure. When we have been for a considerable time tossing on the broad waters, far from the sight of any land or ships, or any mortal creature but ourselves (except a few fish and sea-birds), the whole world, for aught we know, may be under a second deluge, and we, like Noah and his company in the ark, the only surviving remnant of the human race.

The two captains have mutually promised to keep each other company; but this I look upon to be only matter of course, for if ships are unequal in their sailing, they seldom stay for one another, especially strangers. This afternoon, the wind, that had been so long contrary to us, came about to the eastward, (and looks as if it would hold,) to our no small satisfaction. I find our messmates in a better humour, and more pleased with their present condition, than they have been since they came out; which I take to proceed from the contemplation of the miserable circumstances of the passengers on board our neighbour, and making the comparison. We reckon ourselves in a kind of paradise, when we consider how they live, confined and stifled up with such a lousy, stinking rabble, in this hot sultry latitude. . . .

Friday, Sept. 30. — I sat up last night to observe an eclipse of the moon, which the calendar, calculated for London, informed us would happen at five o'clock in the morning, Sept. 30. It began with us about eleven last night, and continued till near two this morning, darkening her body about six digits, or one half; the middle of it being about half an hour after twelve, by which we

may discover that we are in a meridian of about four hours and a half from London, or 67 degrees of Longitude, and consequently have not much above one hundred leagues to run. This is the second eclipse we have had within these fifteen days. We lost our consort in the night, but saw him again this morning nearly two leagues to the windward. This afternoon we spoke with him again. We have had abundance of dolphins about us these three or four days; but we have not taken any more than one, they being shy of the bait. I took in some more gulf-weed to-day with the boat-hook, with shells upon it like that before mentioned, and three living perfect crabs, each less than the nail of my little finger. One of them had something particularly observable, to wit, a thin piece of the white shell which I before noticed as their covering while they remained in the condition of embrios, sticking close to his natural shell upon his back. This sufficiently confirms me in my opinion of the manner of their generation. I have put this remarkable crab with a piece of the gulf-weed, shells, &c., into a glass phial filled with salt water, (for want of spirits of wine,) in hopes to preserve the curiosity till I come on shore. The wind is South West.

Saturday, October 1st. — Last night our consort, who goes incomparably better upon a wind than our vessel, got so far to windward and ahead of us, that this morning we could see nothing of him, and it is like shall see him no more. These South Wests are hot, dry winds, and bring abundance of rain and dirty weather with them. . . .

Tuesday, October 4th. — Last night we struck a dolphin, and this morning we found a flying-fish dead under

the windlass. He is about the bigness of a small mackerel, a sharp head, a small mouth, and a tail forked somewhat like a dolphin, but the lowest branch much larger and longer than the other, and tinged with yellow. His back and sides of a darkish blue, his belly white, and his skin very thick. His wings are of a finny substance, about a span long, reaching, when close to his body from an inch below his gills to an inch above his tail. When they fly it is straight forward, (for they cannot readily turn,) a yard or two above the water; and perhaps fifty yards is the furthest before they dip into the water again, for they cannot support themselves in the air any longer than while their wings continue wet. These flying-fish are the common prey of the dolphin, who is their mortal enemy. When he pursues them, they rise and fly; and he keeps close under them till they drop, and then snaps them up immediately. They generally fly in flocks, four or five, or perhaps a dozen together and a dolphin is seldom caught without one or more in his belly. We put this flying-fish upon the hook, in hopes of catching one, but in a few minutes they got it off without hooking themselves; and they will not meddle with any other bait.

Tuesday Night. — Since eleven o'clock we have struck three fine dolphins, which are a great refreshment to us. This afternoon we have seen abundance of grampuses, which are seldom far from land; but towards evening we had a more evident token, to wit, a little tired bird, something like a lark, came on board us, who certainly is an American, and 't is likely was ashore this day. It is now calm. We hope for a fair wind next.

Friday, October 7. — Last night, about nine o'clock, sprung up a fine gale at NorthEast, which run us in our course at the rate of seven miles an hour all night. We were in hopes of seeing land this morning, but cannot. The water, which we thought was changed, is now as blue as the sky: so that, unless at that time we were running over some unknown shoal, our eyes strangely deceived us. All the reckonings have been out these several days; though the captain says 't is his opinion we are yet a hundred leagues from land; for my part I know not what to think of it; we have run all this day at a great rate, and now night has come on we have no soundings. Sure the American continent is not all sunk under water since we left it.

Saturday, October 8th. — The fair wind continues still; we ran all night in our course, sounding every four hours, but can find no ground yet, nor is the water changed by all this day's run. This afternoon we saw an *Irish Lord*, and a bird which flying looked like a yellow duck. These, they say, are not seen far from the coast. Other signs of lands have we none. Abundance of large porpoises ran by us this afternoon, and we were followed by a shoal of small ones, leaping out of the water as they approached. Towards evening we spied a sail ahead, and spoke with her just before dark. She was bound from New York for Jamaica, and left Sandy Hook yesterday about noon, from which they reckon themselves forty-five leagues distant. By this we compute that we are not above thirty leagues from our Capes, and hope to see land to-morrow.

Sunday, October 9. — We have had the wind fair all

the morning; at twelve we sounded, perceiving the water visibly changed, and struck ground at twenty-five fathoms, to our universal joy. After dinner one of our mess went up aloft to look out, and presently pronounced the long wished-for sound, LAND! LAND! In less than an hour we could descry it from the deck, appearing like tufts of trees. I could not discern it so soon as the rest; my eyes were dimmed with the suffusion of two small drops of joy. By three o'clock we were run in within two leagues of the land, and spied a small sail standing along shore. We would gladly have spoken with her, for our captain was unacquainted with the Coast, and knew not what land it was that we saw. We made all the sail we could to speak with her. We made a signal of distress; but all would not do, the ill-natured dog would not come near us. Then we stood off again till morning, not caring to venture too near.

Monday, October 10.—This morning we stood in again for land; and we that had been here before all agreed that it was Cape Henlopen; about noon we were come very near, and to our great joy saw a pilot-boat come off to us, which was exceeding welcome. He brought on board about a peck of apples with him; they seemed the most delicious I ever tasted in my life; the salt provisions we had been used to gave them a relish. We had extraordinary fine wind all the afternoon, and ran above a hundred miles up the Delaware before ten at night. The country appears very pleasant to the eye, being covered with woods, except here and there a house and plantation. We cast anchor when the tide turned, about two miles below Newcastle, and there lay till the morning tide.

Tuesday, October 11. — This morning we weighed anchor with a gentle breeze, and passed by Newcastle, whence they hailed us and bade us welcome. It is extreme fine weather. The sun enlivens our stiff limbs with his glorious rays of warmth and brightness. The sky looks gay, with here and there a silver cloud. The fresh breezes from the woods refresh us; the immediate prospect of liberty, after so long and irksome confinement, ravishes us. In short, all things conspire to make this the most joyful day I ever knew. As we passed by Chester, some of the company went on shore, impatient once more to tread on terra firma, and designing for Philadelphia by land. Four of us remained on board, not caring for the fatigue of travel when we knew that the journey had much weakened us. About eight at night, the wind failing us, we cast anchor at Redbank, six miles from Philadelphia, and thought we must be obliged to lie on board that night; but, some young Philadelphians happening to be out upon their pleasure in a boat, they came on board, and offered to take us up with them; we accepted of their kind proposal, and about ten o'clock landed at Philadelphia, heartily congratulating each upon our having happily completed so tedious and dangerous a voyage. Thank God!

V. Franklin's "Public Appearance in Business"

1726–1730

Comment. Soon after Franklin returned to Philadelphia he decided to undertake a printing office on his own account. This was for him the important act which marked the time when the boy became the man. He well understood what he must require of himself to insure success. He formed the habit of considering whether what he did, to-day, tended to build up the business or the reputation he hoped to have a year hence, and he began to rule his conduct in accordance with principles derived from close observation and reflection.

We sometimes feel that Franklin regarded a good character chiefly as a business asset, because he explained so frankly the motives that influenced him. No doubt he really was convinced that it paid to be always industrious and honest; Poor Richard was unfailing in precept and example for lads who would become self-made men, but if we read the whole story of his continuous effort, of nights and Sundays spent in hard study, of money taken from a very small hoard in order to buy books, we shall soon realize that Ben Franklin's desire for self-improvement had a far deeper root than the hope of fortune and success. If there could be a doubt of his love of learning, of the sincerity of his desire to attain a well-disciplined character and skill in judging affairs, it must be dispelled when we learn that as soon as he had gained a modest competence, he retired from business in order to devote his whole time to these objects.

No part of Franklin's Autobiography is more instructive than the story of those years in which he made out, as it were, the scheme of his life and entered upon the accomplishment.

D.

Franklin's Outline. Our voyage and arrival. My resolutions in Writing. My Sickness. His Death [Mr. Denham's]. Found D. R. married. Go to work again with Keimer. Terms. His ill-usage of me. My Resentment. Saying of Decow. My Friends at Burlington. Agreement with H. Meredith to set up in Partnership. Do so. Success with the Assembly. Hamilton's Friendship. Sewell's History. Gazette. Paper money. Webb. Writing Busy Body. Breintnal. Godfrey. His Character. Suit against us. Offer of my Friends, Coleman and Grace. Continue the Business, and M. goes to Carolina. Pamphlet on Paper Money. Gazette from Keimer. Junto credit; its plan. Marry.

We landed in Philadelphia on the 11th of October, where I found sundry alterations. Keith was no longer governor, being superseded by Major Gordon. I met him walking the streets as a common citizen. He seemed a little ashamed at seeing me, but passed without saying anything. I should have been as much ashamed at seeing Miss Read, had not her friends, despairing with reason of my return after the receipt of my letter, persuaded her to marry another, one Rogers, a potter, which was done in my absence. With him, however, she was never happy, and soon parted from him, refusing to live with him or bear his name, it now being said that he had another wife. He was a worthless fellow, though an excellent workman, which was a temptation to her friends. He got into debt, ran away in 1727 or 1728, went to the West Indies, and died there. Keimer had got a better house, a shop well supplied with stationery, plenty of new types, a number of hands, though none good, and seemed to have a great deal of business.

Mr. Denham took a store in Water Street, where we opened our goods; I attended the business diligently,

studied accounts, and grew, in a little time, expert in selling. We lodged and boarded together; he counselled me as a father, having a sincere regard for me. I respected and loved him, and we might have gone on together very happy; but in the beginning of February, $172\frac{6}{7}$, when I had just passed my twenty-first year, we both were taken ill. My distemper was a pleurisy, which very nearly carried me off. I suffered a good deal, gave up the point in my own mind, and was rather disappointed when I found myself recovering, regretting, in some degree, that I must now, sometime or other, have all that disagreeable work to do over again. I forget what his distemper was; it held him a long time, and at length carried him off. He left me a small legacy in a nuncupative will as a token of his kindness for me, and he left me once more to the wide world; for the store was taken into the care of his executors, and my employment under him ended.

My brother-in-law, Holmes, being now at Philadelphia, advised my return to my business; and Keimer tempted me, with an offer of large wages by the year, to come and take the management of his printing-house, that he might better attend his stationer's shop. I had heard a bad character of him in London from his wife and her friends, and was not fond of having any more to do with him. I tried for further employment as a merchant's clerk; but not readily meeting with any, I closed again with Keimer. I found in his house these hands: Hugh Meredith, a Welsh Pennsylvanian, thirty years of age, bred to country work; honest, sensible, had a great deal of solid observation, was something of a

reader, but given to drink. Stephen Potts, a young countryman of full age, bred to the same, of uncommon natural parts, and great wit and humor, but a little idle. These he had agreed with at extreme low wages per week, to be raised a shilling every three months, as they would deserve by improving in their business; and the expectation of these high wages, to come on hereafter, was what he had drawn them in with. Meredith was to work at press, Potts at bookbinding, which he, by agreement, was to teach them, though he knew neither one nor the other. John ——, a wild Irishman, brought up to no business, whose service, for four years, Keimer had purchased from the captain of a ship; he, too, was to be made a pressman. George Webb, an Oxford scholar, whose time for four years he had likewise bought, intending him for a compositor, of whom more presently; and David Harry, a country boy, whom he had taken apprentice.

I soon perceived that the intention of engaging me at wages so much higher than he had been used to give was to have these raw, cheap hands formed through me; and as soon as I had instructed them, then they being all articled to him, he should be able to do without me. I went on, however, very cheerfully, put his printing-house in order, which had been in great confusion, and brought his hands by degrees to mind their business and to do it better.

It was an odd thing to find an Oxford scholar in the situation of a bought servant. He was not more than eighteen years of age, and gave me this account of himself; that he was born in Gloucester, educated at a grammar-school there, had been distinguished among the

scholars for some apparent superiority in performing his part, when they exhibited plays; belonged to the Witty Club there, and had written some pieces in prose and verse, which were printed in the Gloucester newspapers; thence he was sent to Oxford; where he continued about a year, but not well satisfied, wishing of all things to see London, and become a player. At length receiving his quarterly allowance of fifteen guineas, instead of discharging his debts he walked out of town, hid his gown in a furze bush, and footed it to London, where, having no friend to advise him, he fell into bad company, soon spent his guineas, found no means of being introduced among the players, grew necessitous, pawned his clothes, and wanted bread. Walking the street very hungry, and not knowing what to do with himself, a crimp's bill was put into his hand, offering immediate entertainment and encouragement to such as would bind themselves to serve in America. He went directly, signed the indentures, was put into the ship, and came over, never writing a line to acquaint his friends what was become of him. He was lively, witty, good-natured, and a pleasant companion, but idle, thoughtless, and imprudent to the last degree.

John, the Irishman, soon ran away; with the rest I began to live very agreeably, for they all respected me the more, as they found Keimer incapable of instructing them, and that from me they learned something daily. We never worked on Saturday, that being Keimer's Sabbath, so I had two days for reading. My acquaintance with ingenious people in the town increased. Keimer himself treated me with great civility and apparent re-

gard, and nothing now made me uneasy but my debt to Vernon, which I was yet unable to pay, being hitherto but a poor economist. He, however, kindly made no demand of it.

Our printing-house often wanted sorts, and there was no letter-founder in America; I had seen types cast at James's in London, but without much attention to the manner; however, I now contrived a mould, made use of the letters we had as puncheons, struck the matrices in lead, and thus supplied in a pretty tolerable way all deficiencies. I also engraved several things on occasion; I made the ink; I was warehouseman, and everything, and, in short, quite a factotum.

But, however serviceable I might be, I found that my services became every day of less importance, as the other hands improved in the business; and when Keimer paid my second quarter's wages, he let me know that he felt them too heavy, and thought I should make an abatement. He grew by degrees less civil, put on more of the master, frequently found fault, was captious, and seemed ready for an outbreaking. I went on, nevertheless, with a good deal of patience, thinking that his incumbered circumstances were partly the cause. At length a trifle snapped our connections; for, a great noise happening near the court-house, I put my head out of the window to see what was the matter. Keimer, being in the street, looked up and saw me, called out to me in a loud voice and angry tone to mind my business, adding some reproachful words, that nettled me the more for their publicity, all the neighbors who were looking out on the same occasion being witnesses how I was treated. He came up

immediately into the printing-house, continued the quarrel, high words passed on both sides, he gave me the quarter's warning we had stipulated, expressing a wish that he had not been obliged to so long a warning. I told him his wish was unnecessary, for I would leave him that instant; and so, taking my hat, walked out of doors, desiring Meredith, whom I saw below, to take care of some things I left, and bring them to my lodgings.

Meredith came accordingly in the evening, when we talked my affair over. He had conceived a great regard for me, and was very unwilling that I should leave the house while he remained in it. He dissuaded me from returning to my native country, which I began to think of; he reminded me that Keimer was in debt for all he possessed; that his creditors began to be uneasy; that he kept his shop miserably, sold often without profit for ready money, and often trusted without keeping accounts; that he must therefore fail, which would make a vacancy I might profit of. I objected my want of money. He then let me know that his father had a high opinion of me, and from some discourse that had passed between them, he was sure would advance money to set us up, if I would enter into partnership with him. "My time," says he, "will be out with Keimer in the spring; by that time we may have our press and types in from London. I am sensible I am no workman; if you like it, your skill in the business shall be set against the stock I furnish, and we will share the profits equally."

The proposal was agreeable, and I consented; his father was in town and approved of it; the more as he saw I had great influence with his son, had prevailed on him to ab-

stain long from dram-drinking, and he hoped might break him of that wretched habit entirely, when we came to be so closely connected. I gave an inventory to the father, who carried it to a merchant; the things were sent for, the secret was to be kept till they should arrive, and in the mean time I was to get work, if I could, at the other printing-house. But I found no vacancy there, and so remained idle a few days, when Keimer, on a prospect of being employed to print some paper money in New Jersey, which would require cuts and various types that I only could supply, and apprehending Bradford might engage me and get the job from him, sent me a very civil message, that old friends should not part for a few words, the effect of sudden passion, and wishing me to return. Meredith persuaded me to comply, as it would give more opportunity for his improvement under my daily instructions; so I returned, and we went on more smoothly than for some time before. The New Jersey job was obtained, I contrived a copper-plate press for it, the first that had been seen in the country: I cut several ornaments and checks for the bills. We went together to Burlington, where I executed the whole to satisfaction; and he received so large a sum for the work as to be enabled thereby to keep his head much longer above water.

At Burlington I made an acquaintance with many principal people of the province. Several of them had been appointed by the Assembly a committee to attend the press, and take care that no more bills were printed than the law directed. They were, therefore, by turns, constantly with us, and generally he who attended brought with him a friend or two for company. My mind having

been much more improved by reading than Keimer's, I suppose it was for that reason my conversation seemed to be more valued. They had me to their houses, introduced me to their friends, and showed me much civility; while he, though the master, was a little neglected. In truth, he was an odd fish; ignorant of common life, fond of rudely opposing received opinions, slovenly to extreme dirtiness, enthusiastic in some points of religion, and a little knavish withal.

We continued there near three months; and by that time I could reckon among my acquired friends, Judge Allen, Samuel Bustill, the secretary of the province, Isaac Pearson, Joseph Cooper, and several of the Smiths, members of Assembly, and Isaac Decow, the surveyor-general. The latter was a shrewd, sagacious old man, who told me that he began for himself, when young, by wheeling clay for the brick-makers, learned to write after he was of age, carried the chain for surveyors, who taught him surveying, and he had now by his industry acquired a good estate; and says he, "I foresee that you will soon work this man out of his business, and make a fortune in it at Philadelphia." He had not then the least intimation of my intention to set up there or anywhere. These friends were afterwards of great use to me, as I occasionally was to some of them. They all continued their regard for me as long as they lived.

Before I enter upon my public appearance in business, it may be well to let you know the then state of my mind with regard to my principles and morals, that you may see how far those influenced the future events of my life. My parents had early given me religious im-

pressions, and brought me through my childhood piously in the Dissenting way. But I was scarce fifteen when, after doubting by turns of several points, as I found them disputed in the different books I read, I began to doubt of Revelation itself. Some books against Deism fell into my hands; they were said to be the substance of sermons preached at Boyle's Lectures. It happened that they wrought an effect on me quite contrary to what was intended by them; for the arguments of the Deists, which were quoted to be refuted, appeared to me much stronger than the refutations; in short, I soon became a thorough Deist. My arguments perverted some others, particularly Collins and Ralph; but each of them having afterwards wronged me greatly without the least compunction, and recollecting Keith's conduct towards me (who was another freethinker), and my own towards Vernon and Miss Read, which at times gave me great trouble, I began to suspect that this doctrine, though it might be true, was not very useful. My London pamphlet, which had for its motto these lines of Dryden: —

> "Whatever is, is right. Though purblind man
> Sees but a part o' the chain, the nearest link:
> His eyes not carrying to the equal beam,
> That poises all above;"

and from the attributes of God, his infinite wisdom, goodness, and power, concluded that nothing could possibly be wrong in the world, and that vice and virtue were empty distinctions, no such things existing, appeared now not so clever a performance as I once thought it; and I doubted whether some error had not insinuated itself unperceived into my argument, so as to infect all

that followed, as is common in metaphysical reasonings.

I grew convinced that *truth*, *sincerity*, and *integrity* in dealings between man and man were of the utmost importance to the felicity of life; and I formed written resolutions, which still remain in my journal book, to practise them ever while I lived. Revelation had indeed no weight with me, as such; but I entertained an opinion that, though certain actions might not be bad *because* they were forbidden by it, or good *because* it commanded them, yet probably those actions might be forbidden *because* they were bad for us, or commanded *because* they were beneficial to us, in their own natures, all the circumstances of things considered. And this persuasion, with the kind hand of Providence, or some guardian angel, or accidental favorable circumstances and situations, or all together, preserved me, through this dangerous time of youth, and the hazardous situations I was sometimes in among strangers, remote from the eye and advice of my father, without any wilful gross immorality or injustice, that might have been expected from my want of religion. I say wilful, because the instances I have mentioned had something of *necessity* in them, from my youth, inexperience, and the knavery of others. I had, therefore, a tolerable character to begin the world with; I valued it properly, and determined to preserve it.

We had not been long returned to Philadelphia before the new types arrived from London. We settled with Keimer, and left him by his consent before he heard of it. We found a house to hire near the market,

and took it. To lessen the rent, which was then but twenty-four pounds a year, though I have since known it to let for seventy, we took in Thomas Godfrey, a glazier, and his family, who were to pay a considerable part of it to us, and we to board with them. We had scarce opened our letters and put our press in order, before George House, an acquaintance of mine, brought a countryman to us, whom he had met in the street inquiring for a printer. All our cash was now expended in the variety of particulars we had been obliged to procure, and this countryman's five shillings, being our first-fruits, and coming so seasonably, gave me more pleasure than any crown I have since earned; and the gratitude I felt toward House has made me often more ready than perhaps I should otherwise have been to assist young beginners.

There are croakers in every country, always boding its ruin. Such a one then lived in Philadelphia; a person of note, an elderly man, with a wise look and a very grave manner of speaking; his name was Samuel Mickle. This gentleman, a stranger to me, stopped one day at my door, and asked me if I was the young man who had lately opened a new printing-house. Being answered in the affirmative, he said he was sorry for me, because it was an expensive undertaking, and the expense would be lost; for Philadelphia was a sinking place, the people already half bankrupts, or near being so; all appearances to the contrary, such as new buildings and the rise of rents, being to his certain knowledge fallacious; for they were, in fact, among the things that would soon ruin us. And he gave me such a detail of misfortunes now exist-

ing, or that were soon to exist, that he left me half melancholy. Had I known him before I engaged in this business, probably I never should have done it. This man continued to live in this decaying place, and to declaim in the same strain, refusing for many years to buy a house there, because all was going to destruction; and at last I had the pleasure of seeing him give five times as much for one as he might have bought it for when he first began his croaking.

I should have mentioned before that, in the autumn of the preceding year, I had formed most of my ingenious acquaintance into a club of mutual improvement, which we called the JUNTO;[1] we met on Friday evenings. The rules[2] that I drew up required that every member, in his turn, should produce one or more queries on any point of Morals, Politics, or Natural Philosophy, to be discussed by the company; and once in three months produce and read an essay of his own writing, on any subject he pleased. Our debates were to be under the direction of a president, and to be conducted in the sincere spirit of inquiry after truth, without fondness for dispute, or desire of victory; and to prevent warmth, all expressions of positiveness in opinions, or direct contradiction, were after some time made contraband, and prohibited under small pecuniary penalties.

The first members were Joseph Breintnal, a copier of deeds for the scriveners, a good-natured, friendly, mid-

[1] First called "Leather Apron Club."

[2] *The Rules for a Club Established for Mutual Improvement* are dated 1728. In 1792, Herder translated these rules into German as the constitution for a club of the "Friends of Humanity." The rules and the conditions of membership are given in SELECTIONS, pp. 289-91.

dle-aged man, a great lover of poetry, reading all he could meet with, and writing some that was tolerable; very ingenious in many little knicknackeries, and of sensible conversation.

Thomas Godfrey, a self-taught mathematician, great in his way, and afterward inventor of what is now called Hadley's Quadrant. But he knew little out of his way, and was not a pleasing companion; as, like most great mathematicians I have met with, he expected universal precision in everything said, or was forever denying or distinguishing upon trifles, to the disturbance of all conversation. He soon left us.

Nicholas Scull, a surveyor, afterwards surveyor-general, who loved books, and sometimes made a few verses.

William Parsons, bred a shoemaker, but, loving reading, had acquired a considerable share of mathematics, which he first studied with a view to astrology, and afterwards laughed at it. He also became surveyor-general.

William Maugridge, a joiner, a most exquisite mechanic, and a solid, sensible man.

Hugh Meredith, Stephen Potts, and George Webb I have characterized before.

Robert Grace, a young gentleman of some fortune, generous, lively, and witty; a lover of punning and of his friends.

And William Coleman, then a merchant's clerk, about my age, who had the coolest, clearest head, the best heart, and the exactest morals of almost any man I ever met with. He became afterwards a merchant of great note, and one of our provincial judges. Our friendship continued without interruption to his death, upward of

forty years; and the club continued almost as long, and was the best school of philosophy, morality, and politics that then existed in the province; for our queries, which were read the week preceding their discussion, put us upon reading with attention upon the several subjects, that we might speak more to the purpose; and here, too, we acquired better habits of conversation, everything being studied in our rules which might prevent our disgusting each other. From hence the long continuance of the club, which I shall have frequent occasion to speak further of hereafter.

But my giving this account of it here is to show something of the interest I had, every one of these exerting themselves in recommending business to us. Breintnal particularly procured us from the Quakers the printing of forty sheets of their history, the rest being done by Keimer; and upon this we worked exceedingly hard, for the price was low. It was a folio, pro patria size, in pica, with long primer notes. I composed of it a sheet a day, and Meredith worked it off at press; it was often eleven at night, and sometimes later, before I had finished my distribution for the next day's work, for the little jobs sent in by our other friends now and then put us back. But so determined I was to continue doing a sheet a day of the folio, that one night, when, having imposed my forms, I thought my day's work over, one of them by accident was broken, and two pages reduced to pi, I immediately distributed and composed it over again before I went to bed; and this industry, visible to our neighbors, began to give us character and credit; particularly, I was told, that mention being made of the new printing-

office at the merchants' Every-night club, the general opinion was that it must fail, there being already two printers in the place, Keimer and Bradford; but Dr. Baird (whom you and I saw many years after at his

BRADFORD'S PRINTING OFFICE AND BOOK STORE
Adjoining the Old London Tavern in Philadelphia

native place, St. Andrew's in Scotland) gave a contrary opinion: "For the industry of that Franklin," says he, "is superior to anything I ever saw of the kind; I see him still at work when I go home from the club, and he is at work again before his neighbors are out of bed." This struck the rest, and we soon after had offers from one of them to supply us with stationery; but as yet we did not choose to engage in shop business.

I mention this industry the more particularly and the more freely, though it seems to be talking in my own

praise, that those of my posterity who shall read it may know the use of that virtue, when they see its effects in my favor throughout this relation.

George Webb, who had found a female friend that lent him wherewith to purchase his time of Keimer, now came to offer himself as a journeyman to us. We could not then employ him; but I foolishly let him know as a secret that I soon intended to begin a newspaper, and might then have work for him. My hopes of success, as I told him, were founded on this, that the then only newspaper, printed by Bradford, was a paltry thing, wretchedly managed, no way entertaining, and yet was profitable to him; I therefore thought a good paper would scarcely fail of good encouragement. I requested Webb not to mention it; but he told it to Keimer, who immediately, to be beforehand with me, published proposals for printing one himself, on which Webb was to be employed. I resented this; and to counteract them, as I could not yet begin our paper, I wrote several pieces of entertainment for Bradford's paper, under the title of the BUSY BODY, which Breintnal continued some months. By this means the attention of the public was fixed on that paper, and Keimer's proposals, which we burlesqued and ridiculed, were disregarded. He began his paper, however, and, after carrying it on three quarters of a year, with at most only ninety subscribers, he offered it to me for a trifle; and I, having been ready some time to go on with it, took it in hand directly; and it proved in a few years extremely profitable to me.[1]

[1] The exact date of the purchase of the paper was Oct. 2, 1729. Keimer's business declined after Franklin and Meredith had purchased his paper, until his credit was gone. He sold his printing house and went to the Barbadoes.

I perceive that I am apt to speak in the singular number, though our partnership still continued; the reason may be that, in fact, the whole management of the business lay upon me. Meredith was no compositor, a poor pressman, and seldom sober. My friends lamented my connection with him, but I was to make the best of it.

Our first papers made a quite different appearance from any before in the province; a better type, and better printed; but some spirited remarks of my writing, on the dispute then going on between Governor Burnet and the Massachusetts Assembly, struck the principal people, occasioned the paper and the manager of it to be much talked of, and in a few weeks brought them all to be our subscribers.

Their example was followed by many, and our number went on growing continually. This was one of the first good effects of my having learned a little to scribble; another was, that the leading men, seeing a newspaper now in the hands of one who could also handle a pen, thought it convenient to oblige and encourage me. Bradford still printed the votes, and laws, and other public business. He had printed an address of the House to the governor in a coarse, blundering manner; we reprinted it elegantly and correctly, and sent one to every member. They were sensible of the difference; it strengthened the hands of our friends in the House, and they voted us their printers for the year ensuing.

Among my friends in the House I must not forget Mr. Hamilton, before mentioned, who was then returned from England, and had a seat in it. He interested himself for me strongly in that instance, as he did in

many others afterward, continuing his patronage till his death.

Mr. Vernon, about this time, put me in mind of the debt I owed him, but did not press me. I wrote him an ingenuous letter of acknowledgment, craved his forbearance a little longer, which he allowed me, and as soon as I was able, I paid the principal with interest, and many thanks; so that erratum was in some degree corrected.

But now another difficulty came upon me which I had never the least reason to expect. Mr. Meredith's father, who was to have paid for our printing-house, according to the expectations given me, was able to advance only one hundred pounds currency, which had been paid; and a hundred more was due to the merchant, who grew impatient, and sued us all. We gave bail, but saw that, if the money could not be raised in time, the suit must soon come to a judgment and execution, and our hopeful prospects must, with us, be ruined, as the press and letters must be sold for payment, perhaps at half price.

In this distress two true friends, whose kindness I have never forgotten, nor ever shall forget while I can remember anything, came to me separately, unknown to each other, and, without any application from me, offering each of them to advance me all the money that should be necessary to enable me to take the whole business upon myself, if that should be practicable; but they did not like my continuing the partnership with Meredith, who, as they said, was often seen drunk in the streets, and playing at low games in ale-houses, much to our discredit. These two friends were William Coleman and Robert Grace. I told them I could not propose a

separation while any prospect remained of the Merediths' fulfilling their part of our agreement, because I thought myself under great obligations to them for what they had done, and would do if they could; but, if they finally failed in their performance, and our partnership must be dissolved, I should then think myself at liberty to accept the assistance of my friends.

Thus the matter rested for some time, when I said to my partner, "Perhaps your father is dissatisfied at the part you have undertaken in this affair of ours, and is unwilling to advance for you and me what he would for you alone. If that is the case, tell me, and I will resign the whole to you, and go about my business." "No," said he, "my father has really been disappointed, and is really unable; and I am unwilling to distress him further. I see this is a business I am not fit for. I was bred a farmer, and it was a folly in me to come to town, and put myself, at thirty years of age, an apprentice to learn a new trade. Many of our Welsh people are going to settle in North Carolina, where land is cheap. I am inclined to go with them, and follow my old employment. You may find friends to assist you. If you will take the debts of the company upon you, return to my father the hundred pounds he has advanced, pay my little personal debts, and give me thirty pounds and a new saddle, I will relinquish the partnership, and leave the whole in your hands." I agreed to this proposal; it was drawn up in writing, signed, and sealed immediately. I gave him what he demanded, and he went soon after to Carolina, from whence he sent me next year two long letters, containing the best account that had been

given of that country, the climate, the soil, husbandry, etc., for in those matters he was very judicious. I printed them in the papers, and they gave great satisfaction to the public.

As soon as he was gone, I recurred to my two friends; and because I would not give an unkind preference to either, I took half of what each had offered and I wanted of one, and half of the other; paid off the company's debts, and went on with the business in my own name, advertising that the partnership was dissolved. I think this was in or about the year 1729.[1]

About this time there was a cry among the people for more paper money, only fifteen thousand pounds being extant in the province, and that soon to be sunk. The wealthy inhabitants opposed any addition, being against all paper currency, from an apprehension that it would depreciate, as it had done in New England, to the prejudice of all creditors. We had discussed this point in our Junto, where I was on the side of an addition, being persuaded that the first small sum struck in 1723 had done much good by increasing the trade, employment, and number of inhabitants in the province, since I now saw all the old houses inhabited, and many new ones building: whereas I remembered well that when I first walked about the streets of Philadelphia, eating my roll, I saw most of the houses in Walnut Street, between Second and Front streets, with bills on their doors, "To be let;" and many likewise in Chestnut Street and other streets, which made me then think the inhabitants of the city were deserting it one after another.

[1] The exact date was July 14, 1730. S.-I. p. 306.

Our debates possessed me so fully of the subject that I wrote and printed an anonymous pamphlet on it, entitled, *The Nature and Necessity of a Paper Currency.* It was well received by the common people in general; but the rich men disliked it, for it increased and strengthened the clamor for more money, and they happening to have no writers among them that were able to answer it, their opposition slackened, and the point was carried by a majority in the House. My friends there, who conceived I had been of some service, thought fit to reward me by employing me in printing the money; a very profitable job and a great help to me. This was another advantage gained by my being able to write.

The utility of this currency became by time and experience so evident as never afterwards to be much disputed; so that it grew soon to fifty-five thousand pounds, and in 1739 to eighty thousand pounds, since which it arose during war to upwards of three hundred and fifty thousand pounds, trade, building, and inhabitants all the while increasing, though I now think there are limits beyond which the quantity may be hurtful.

I soon after obtained, through my friend Hamilton, the printing of the Newcastle paper money,[1] another profitable job as I then thought it; small things appearing great to those in small circumstances; and these, to me, were really great advantages, as they were great encouragements. He procured for me, also, the printing of the laws and votes of that government, which continued in my hands as long as I followed the business.

[1] That is, of the paper money issued by the government of "the Delaware Counties."

I now opened a little stationer's shop. I had in it blanks of all sorts, the correctest that ever appeared among us, being assisted in that by my friend Breintnal. I had also paper, parchment, chapmen's books, etc. One Whitemarsh, a compositor I had known in London, an excellent workman, now came to me, and worked with me constantly and diligently; and I took an apprentice, the son of Aquila Rose.

I began now gradually to pay off the debt I was under for the printing-house. In order to secure my credit and character as a tradesman, I took care not only to be in *reality* industrious and frugal, but to avoid all appearances to the contrary. I dressed plainly; I was seen at no places of idle diversion. I never went out a fishing or shooting; a book, indeed, sometimes debauched me from my work, but that was seldom, snug, and gave no scandal; and, to show that I was not above my business, I sometimes brought home the paper I purchased at the stores through the streets on a wheelbarrow. Thus being esteemed an industrious, thriving young man, and paying duly for what I bought, the merchants who imported stationery solicited my custom; others proposed supplying me with books, and I went on swimmingly. In the mean time, Keimer's credit and business declining daily, he was at last forced to sell his printing-house to satisfy his creditors. He went to Barbadoes, and there lived some years in very poor circumstances.

His apprentice, David Harry, whom I had instructed while I worked with him, set up in his place at Philadelphia, having bought his materials. I was at first apprehensive of a powerful rival in Harry, as his friends

were very able, and had a good deal of interest. I therefore proposed a partnership to him, which he, fortunately for me, rejected with scorn. He was very proud, dressed like a gentleman, lived expensively, took much diversion and pleasure abroad, ran in debt, and neglected his business; upon which, all business left him; and finding nothing to do, he followed Keimer to Barbadoes, taking the printing-house with him. There this apprentice employed his former master as a journeyman; they quarreled often; Harry went continually behindhand, and at length was forced to sell his types and return to his country work in Pennsylvania. The person that bought them employed Keimer to use them, but in a few years he died.

FRANKLIN'S BOOK SHOP
Next to Christ Church

There remained now no competitor with me at Philadelphia but the old one, Bradford; who was rich and easy, did a little printing now and then by straggling hands, but was not very anxious about the business. However, as he kept the post-office, it was imagined he had better opportunities of obtaining news; his paper

was thought a better distributer of advertisements than mine, and therefore had many more, which was a profitable thing to him, and a disadvantage to me; for, though I did indeed receive and send papers by the post, yet the public opinion was otherwise, for what I did send was by bribing the riders, who took them privately, Bradford being unkind enough to forbid it, which occasioned some resentment on my part; and I thought so meanly of him for it that, when I afterward came into his situation, I took care never to imitate it.

I had hitherto continued to board with Godfrey who lived in part of my house with his wife and children, and had one side of the shop for his glazier's business, though he worked little, being always absorbed in his mathematics. Mrs. Godfrey projected a match for me with a relation's daughter, took opportunities of bringing us often together, till a serious courtship on my part ensued, the girl being in herself very deserving. The old folks encouraged me by continual invitations to supper, and by leaving us together, till at length it was time to explain. Mrs. Godfrey managed our little treaty. I let her know that I expected as much money with their daughter as would pay off my remaining debt for the printing-house, which I believe was not then above a hundred pounds. She brought me word they had no such sum to spare; I said they might mortgage their house in the loan-office. The answer to this, after some days, was, that they did not approve the match; that, on inquiry of Bradford, they had been informed the printing business was not a profitable one; the types would soon be worn out, and more wanted; that S. Keimer and D. Harry

had failed one after the other, and I should probably soon follow them; and, therefore, I was forbidden the house, and the daughter shut up.

Whether this was a real change of sentiment or only artifice, on a supposition of our being too far engaged in affection to retract, and therefore that we should steal a marriage, which would leave them at liberty to give or withhold what they pleased, I know not; but I suspected the latter, resented it, and went no more. Mrs. Godfrey brought me afterwards some more favorable accounts of their disposition, and would have drawn me on again; but I declared absolutely my resolution to have nothing more to do with that family. This was resented by the Godfreys; we differed, and they removed, leaving me the whole house, and I resolved to take no more inmates.

But this affair having turned my thoughts to marriage, I looked round me and made overtures of acquaintance in other places; but soon found that, the business of a printer being generally thought a poor one, I was not to expect money with a wife, unless with such a one as I should not otherwise think agreeable. . . . A friendly correspondence as neighbors and old acquaintances had continued between me and Mrs. Read's family, who all had a regard for me from the time of my first lodging in their house. I was often invited there and consulted in their affairs, wherein I sometimes was of service. I pitied poor Miss Read's unfortunate situation, who was generally dejected, seldom cheerful, and avoided company. I considered my giddiness and inconstancy when in London as in a great degree the cause of her unhappiness, though the mother was good enough to think the fault

more her own than mine, as she had prevented our marrying before I went thither, and persuaded the other match in my absence. Our mutual affection was revived, but there were now great objections to our union. The match [1] was indeed looked upon as invalid, a preceding wife being said to be living in England; but this could not easily be proved, because of the distance; and though there was a report of his death, it was not certain. Then, though it should be true, he had left many debts, which his successor might be called upon to pay. We ventured, however, over all these difficulties, and I took her to wife, September 1, 1730. None of the inconveniences happened that we had apprehended; she proved a good and faithful helpmate, assisted me much by attending the shop; we throve together, and have ever mutually endeavored to make each other happy. Thus I corrected that great *erratum* as well as I could.

[1] That is, the marriage between Miss Read and Rogers, which had occurred while Franklin was in England.

VI. The Self-Made Man

1730–1736

Comment. In this period of his life, Franklin began to reap some reward of his years of effort. By industry and frugality he gained a competence; the faithful performance of obligations established his credit, and, by the part he took in public affairs he soon earned recognition as a citizen of public spirit. He set himself the task of influencing his fellow countrymen, inculcating in his paper and the Almanac the practice of those habits and virtues to which chiefly he attributed his own success. In short, the self-made man became established in the respect of the community and was on the sure road to fortune and success. At this point, ordinarily, men relax their efforts for self-improvement and in the place of study, or reading, or discussion with "ingenious men of parts," become absorbed in the details of business, and in family and social life, or interested in the accumulation of money. With Benjamin Franklin it was otherwise. His zeal for self-improvement was unabated. He studied French, Italian, Spanish, and by this means was able to furnish his readers with news and literature culled from the best in Europe. Had some prophet secretly revealed to him the course of his future life he could scarcely have set about preparation for the responsible duties to come with greater directness and zeal. He once penciled on the margin of his manuscript the note, "Nothing so likely to make a man's fortune as virtue"; but in his own life he continued the pursuit of knowledge and the practice of virtue with unabated zeal after fortune was already assured. At this time, also, Franklin began to devise schemes of public utility, and the skill required for carrying these forward proved an effective discipline in the management of

public affairs. Thus it happened that he was called upon, more and more often, to direct some enterprise of wide usefulness, or to fill positions of trust.

Franklin's Outline. Library erected. Manner of conducting the project. Its plan and utility. Children. Almanac. The use I made of it. Great industry. Constant study. Father's Remark and Advice upon Diligence. Carolina Partnership. Learn French and German. Journey to Boston after ten years. Affection of my Brother. His Death, and leaving me his Son. Art of Virtue. Occasion. City Watch amended.

About this time, our club meeting, not at a tavern, but in a little room of Mr. Grace's, set apart for that purpose, a proposition was made by me that, since our books were often referred to in our disquisitions upon the queries, it might be convenient to us to have them all together where we met, that upon occasion they might be consulted; and by thus clubbing our books to a common library, we should, while we liked to keep them together, have each of us the advantage of using the books of all the other members, which would be nearly as beneficial as if each owned the whole. It was liked and agreed to, and we filled one end of the room with such books as we could best spare. The number was not so great as we expected; and though they had been of great use, yet some inconveniences occurring for want of due care of them, the collection, after about a year, was separated, and each took his books home again.

And now I set on foot my first project of a public nature, that for a subscription library. I drew up the proposals, got them put into form by our great scrivener, Brockden, and by the help of my friends in the Junto,

procured fifty subscribers of forty shillings each to begin with, and ten shillings a year for fifty years, the term our company was to continue. We afterwards obtained a charter, the company being increased to one hundred: this was the mother of all the North American subscription libraries, now so numerous. It is become a great thing itself, and continually increasing. These libraries have improved the general conversation of the Americans, made the common tradesmen and farmers as intelligent as most gentlemen from other countries, and perhaps have contributed in some degree to the stand so generally made throughout the colonies in defence of their privileges.

Mem°. Thus far written with the intention express'd in the beginning and therefore contains several little family anecdotes of no importance to others. What follows was written many years after in compliance with the advice contained in these letters, and accordingly intended for the public. The affairs of the Revolution occasioned the interruption.

Note. — The letters mentioned by Franklin in the above memorandum present the best description and criticism of the *Autobiography* the reader can have. The name of Benjamin Vaughan is familiar to students of American history on account of the part he had in the negotiation of the Treaty of Paris, 1783. After more than a century, in which the thirteen United Colonies have become a great nation and many illustrious men have appeared, we still accept the judgment of Benjamin Vaughan in regard to the value and usefulness of Franklin's Autobiography as essentially just and true. D.

LETTER FROM MR. ABEL JAMES, WITH NOTES OF MY LIFE (RECEIVED IN PARIS).

MY DEAR AND HONORED FRIEND: I have often been desirous of writing to thee, but could not be reconciled to the thought, that the letter might fall into the hands of the British, lest some printer or busy-body should publish some part of the contents, and give our friend pain, and myself censure.

Some time since there fell into my hands, to my great joy, about twenty-three pages in thy own handwriting, containing an account of the parentage and life of thyself, directed to thy son, ending in the year 1730, with which there were notes, likewise in thy handwriting; a copy of which I inclose, in hopes it may be a means, if thou continued it up to a later period, that the first and latter part may be put together; and if it is not yet continued, I hope thee will not delay it. Life is uncertain, as the preacher tells; and what will the world say if kind, humane, and benevolent Ben. Franklin should leave his friends and the world deprived of so pleasing and profitable a work; a work which would be useful and entertaining not only to a few, but to millions? The influence writings under that class have on the minds of youth is very great, and has nowhere appeared to me so plain, as in our public friend's journals. It almost insensibly leads the youth into the resolution of endeavoring to become as good and eminent as the journalist. Should thine, for instance, when published (and I think it could not fail of it), lead the youth to equal the industry and temperance of thy early youth, what a blessing with that class would such a work be! I know of no character living, nor many of them put together, who has so much in his power as thyself to promote a greater spirit of industry and early attention to business, frugality, and temperance with the American youth. Not that I think the work would have no

other merit and use in the world, far from it; but the first is of such vast importance that I know nothing that can equal it.

The foregoing letter and the minutes accompanying it being shown to a friend, I received from him the following: —

LETTER FROM MR. BENJAMIN VAUGHAN.[1]

PARIS, January 31, 1783.

MY DEAREST SIR: When I had read over your sheets of minutes of the principal incidents of your life, recovered for you by your Quaker acquaintance, I told you I would send you a letter expressing my reasons why I thought it would be useful to complete and publish it as he desired. . . . As the terms I am inclined to use may tend to offend a person of your manners, I shall only tell you how I would address any other person, who was as good and as great as yourself, but less diffident. I would say to him, Sir, I solicit the history of your life from the following motives: Your history is so remarkable, that if you do not give it, somebody else will certainly give it; and perhaps so as nearly to do as much harm, as your own management of the thing might do good. It will moreover present a table of the internal circumstances of your country, which will very much tend to invite to it settlers of virtuous and manly minds. And considering the eagerness with which such information is sought by them, and the extent of your reputation, I do not know of a more efficacious advertisement than your biography would give. All that has happened to you is also connected with the detail of the manners and situation of a rising people; and in this respect I do not think that the writing of Caesar and Tacitus can be more interesting to a true judge of human nature and society. But these, sir, are small

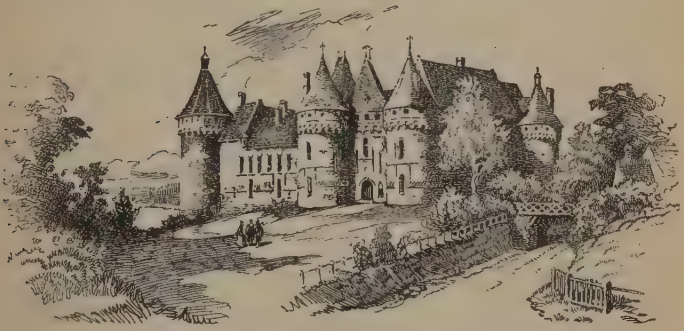
[1] Franklin included the whole of this letter in the *Autobiography*, but it seems best to print here only those parts that refer to the value of this writing to posterity.

reasons, in my opinion, compared with the chance which your life will give for the forming of future great men; and in conjunction with your Art of Virtue (which you design to publish) of improving the features of private character, and consequently of aiding all happiness, both public and domestic. The two works I allude to, sir, will in particular give a noble rule and example of self-education. School and other education constantly proceed upon false principles, and show a clumsy apparatus pointed at a false mark; but your apparatus is simple, and the mark a true one; and while parents and young persons are left destitute of other just means of estimating and becoming prepared for a reasonable course in life, your discovery that the thing is in many a man's private power, will be invaluable! . . . Your biography will not merely teach self-education, but the education of a wise man; and the wisest man will receive lights and improve his progress, by seeing detailed the conduct of another wise man. And why are weaker men to be deprived of such helps, when we see our race has been blundering on in the dark, almost without a guide in this particular, from the farthest trace of time? Show then, sir, how much is to be done, both to sons and fathers; and invite all wise men to become like yourself, and other men to become wise.

The little private incidents which you will also have to relate, will have considerable use, as we want, above all things, rules of prudence in ordinary affairs; and it will be curious to see how you have acted in these. It will be so far a sort of key to life, and explain many things that all men ought to have once explained to them, to give them a chance of becoming wise by foresight. The nearest thing to having experience of one's own, is to have other people's affairs brought before us in a shape that is interesting; this is sure to happen from your pen; our affairs and management will have an air of simplicity

or importance that will not fail to strike; and I am convinced you have conducted them with as much originality as if you had been conducting discussions in politics or philosophy; and what more worthy of experiments and system (its importance and its errors considered) than human life? . . .

But being tired of figuring to myself a character of which every feature suits only one man in the world, without giving him the praise of it, I shall end my letter, my dear Dr. Franklin, with a personal application to your proper self. I am ear-



Chateau at Passy in which Franklin lived

nestly desirous, then, my dear sir, that you should let the world into the traits of your genuine character, as civil broils may otherwise tend to disguise or traduce it. Considering your great age, the caution of your character, and your peculiar style of thinking, it is not likely that any one beside yourself can be sufficiently master of the facts of your life, or the intentions of your mind. Besides all this, the immense revolution of the present period, will necessarily turn our attention to the author of it, and when virtuous principles have been pretended in it, it will be highly important to show that such have really influenced; and, as your own character will be the principal one

to receive a scrutiny, it is proper (even for its effects upon your vast and rising country, as well as upon England and upon Europe) that it should stand respectable and eternal. . . . Take then, my dear sir, this work most speedily in hand; shew yourself good as you are good; temperate as you are temperate; and above all things, prove yourself as one, who from your infancy have loved justice, liberty, and concord, in a way that has made it natural and consistent for you to have acted, as we have seen you act in the last seventeen years of your life. Let Englishmen be made not only to respect, but even to love you. When they think well of individuals in your native country, they will go nearer to thinking well of your country; and when your countrymen see themselves well thought of by Englishmen, they will go nearer to thinking well of England. . . . In the hope, therefore, that you will listen to the prayer addressed to you in this letter, I beg to subscribe myself, my dearest sir, etc., etc.,

Signed, BENJ. VAUGHAN.

Continuation of the Account of my Life, begun at Passy, near Paris, 1784.

It is some time since I received the above letters, but I have been too busy till now to think of complying with the request they contain. It might, too, be much better done if I were at home among my papers, which would aid my memory, and help to ascertain dates; but my return being uncertain, and having just now a little leisure, I will endeavor to recollect and write what I can; if I live to get home, it may there be corrected and improved.

Not having any copy here of what is already written, I know not whether an account is given of the means I

used to establish the Philadelphia public library, which, from a small beginning, is now become so considerable, though I remember to have come down to near the time of that transaction (1730). I will therefore begin here with an account of it, which may be struck out if found to have been already given.

At the time I established myself in Pennsylvania, there was not a good bookseller's shop in any of the colonies to the southward of Boston. In New York and Philadelphia the printers were indeed stationers; they sold only paper, etc., almanacs, ballads, and a few common school books. Those who loved reading were obliged to send for their books from England; the members of the Junto had each a few. We had left the alehouse, where we first met, and hired a room to hold our club in. I proposed that we should all of us bring our books to that room, where they would not only be ready to consult in our conferences, but become a common benefit, each of us being at liberty to borrow such as he wished to read at home. This was accordingly done, and for some time contented us.

Finding the advantage of this little collection, I proposed to render the benefit from books more common, by commencing a public subscription library. I drew a sketch of the plan and rules that would be necessary, and got a skilful conveyancer, Mr. Charles Brockden, to put the whole in form of articles of agreement to be subscribed, by which each subscriber engaged to pay a certain sum down for the first purchase of books, and an annual contribution for increasing them. So few were the readers at that time in Philadelphia, and the major-

ity of us so poor, that I was not able, with great industry, to find more than fifty persons, mostly young tradesmen, willing to pay down for this purpose forty shillings each, and ten shillings per annum. On this little fund we began. The books were imported; the library was opened one day in the week for lending to the subscribers, on their promissory notes to pay double the value if not duly returned. The institution soon manifested its utility, was imitated by other towns, and in other provinces. The libraries were augmented by donations; reading became fashionable; and our people, having no public amusements to divert their attention from study, became better acquainted with books, and in a few years were observed by strangers to be better instructed and more intelligent than people of the same rank generally are in other countries.

When we were about to sign the above-mentioned articles, which were to be binding on us, our heirs, etc., for fifty years, Mr. Brockden, the scrivener, said to us, "You are young men, but it is scarcely probable that any of you will live to see the expiration of the term fixed in the instrument." A number of us, however, are yet living; but the instrument was after a few years rendered null by a charter that incorporated and gave perpetuity to the company.

The objections and reluctances I met with in soliciting the subscriptions made me soon feel the impropriety of presenting one's self as the proposer of any useful project, that might be supposed to raise one's reputation in the smallest degree above that of one's neighbors, when one has need of their assistance to accomplish that pro-

ject. I therefore put myself as much as I could out of sight, and stated it as a scheme of a *number of friends*, who had requested me to go about and propose it to such as they thought lovers of reading. In this way my affair

THE OLD LIBRARY COMPANY OF PHILADELPHIA, 1799
Statue of Franklin over the door

went on more smoothly, and I ever after practised it on such occasions; and from my frequent successes can heartily recommend it. The present little sacrifice of your vanity will afterwards be amply repaid. If it remains a while uncertain to whom the merit belongs, some one more vain than yourself will be encouraged to claim it, and then even envy will be disposed to do you justice by plucking those assumed feathers, and restoring them to their right owner.

This library afforded me the means of improvement by

constant study, for which I set apart an hour or two each day, and thus repaired in some degree the loss of the learned education my father once intended for me. Reading was the only amusement I allowed myself. I spent no time in taverns, games, or frolics of any kind; and my industry in my business continued as indefatigable as it was necessary. I was indebted for my printing-house; I had a young family coming on to be educated, and I had to contend with for business two printers, who were established in the place before me. My circumstances, however, grew daily easier. My original habits of frugality continuing, and my father having, among his instructions to me when a boy, frequently repeated a proverb of Solomon, "Seest thou a man diligent in his calling, he shall stand before kings, he shall not stand before mean men," I from thence considered industry as a means of obtaining wealth and distinction, which encouraged me, though I did not think that I should ever literally *stand before kings*, which, however, has since happened; for I have stood before *five*, and even had the honor of sitting down with one, the King of Denmark, to dinner.

We have an English proverb that says, "*He that would thrive, must ask his wife.*" It was lucky for me that I had one as much disposed to industry and frugality as myself. She assisted me cheerfully in my business, folding and stitching pamphlets, tending shop, purchasing old linen rags for the paper makers, etc., etc. We kept no idle servants, our table was plain and simple, our furniture of the cheapest. For instance, my breakfast was a long time bread and milk (no tea), and I ate it out of a two-penny earthen porringer, with a pewter spoon. But

mark how luxury will enter families, and make a progress, in spite of principle: being called one morning to breakfast, I found it in a China bowl, with a spoon of silver! They had been bought for me without my knowledge by my wife, and had cost her the enormous sum of three-and-twenty shillings, for which she had no other excuse or apology to make, but that she thought *her* husband deserved a silver spoon and China bowl as well as any of his neighbors. This was the first appearance of plate and China in our house, which afterward, in a course of years, as our wealth increased, augmented gradually to several hundred pounds in value.

I had been religiously educated as a Presbyterian; and though some of the dogmas of that persuasion, such as *the eternal decrees of God, election, reprobation, etc.*, appeared to me unintelligible, others doubtful, and I early absented myself from the public assemblies of the sect, Sunday being my studying day, I never was without some religious principles. I never doubted, for instance, the existence of the Deity; that He made the world, and governed it by his Providence; that the most acceptable service of God was the doing good to man; that our souls are immortal; and that all crime will be punished, and virtue rewarded, either here or hereafter. These I esteemed the essentials of every religion; and being to be found in all the religions we had in our country, I respected them all, though with different degrees of respect, as I found them more or less mixed with other articles, which, without any tendency to inspire, promote, or confirm morality, served principally to divide us, and make us unfriendly to one another. This respect to all, with an

opinion that the worst had some good effects, induced me to avoid all discourse that might tend to lessen the good opinion another might have of his own religion; and as our province increased in people, and new places of worship were continually wanted, and generally erected by voluntary contribution, my mite for such purpose, whatever might be the sect, was never refused.

Though I seldom attended any public worship, I had still an opinion of its propriety, and of its utility when rightly conducted, and I regularly paid my annual subscription for the support of the only Presbyterian minister or meeting we had in Philadelphia. He used to visit me sometimes as a friend, and admonish me to attend his administrations, and I was now and then prevailed on to do so, once for five Sundays successively. Had he been in my opinion a good preacher, perhaps I might have continued, notwithstanding the occasion I had for the Sunday's leisure in my course of study; but his discourses were chiefly either polemic arguments, or explications of the peculiar doctrines of our sect, and were all to me very dry, uninteresting, and unedifying, since not a single moral principle was inculcated or enforced, their aim seeming to be rather to make us Presbyterians than good citizens.

At length he took for his text that verse of the fourth chapter of Philippians, "*Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, honest, just, pure, lovely, or of good report, if there be any virtue, or any praise, think on these things.*" And I imagined, in a sermon on such a text, we could not miss of having some morality. But he confined himself to five points only, as meant by the apostle, viz.:

1. Keeping holy the Sabbath day. 2. Being diligent in reading the holy Scriptures. 3. Attending duly the public worship. 4. Partaking of the Sacrament. 5. Paying a due respect to God's ministers. These might be all good things; but as they were not the kind of good things that I expected from that text, I despaired of ever meeting with them from any other, was disgusted, and attended his preaching no more. I had some years before composed a little Liturgy, or form of prayer, for my own private use (viz., in 1728), entitled, *Articles of Belief and Acts of Religion.* I returned to the use of this, and went no more to the public assemblies. My conduct might be blamable, but I leave it, without attempting further to excuse it; my present purpose being to relate facts, and not to make apologies for them.

It was about this time I conceived the bold and arduous project of arriving at moral perfection. I wished to live without committing any fault at any time; I would conquer all that either natural inclination, custom, or company might lead me into. As I knew, or thought I knew, what was right and wrong, I did not see why I might not always do the one and avoid the other. But I soon found I had undertaken a task of more difficulty than I had imagined. While my care was employed in guarding against one fault, I was often surprised by another; habit took the advantage of inattention; inclination was sometimes too strong for reason. I concluded, at length, that the mere speculative conviction that it was our interest to be completely virtuous was not sufficient to prevent our slipping; and that the contrary habits must be broken, and good ones acquired and established, before we can

have any dependence on a steady, uniform rectitude of conduct. For this purpose I therefore contrived the following method.

In the various enumerations of the moral virtues I had met with in my reading, I found the catalogue more or less numerous, as different writers included more or fewer ideas under the same name. Temperance, for example, was by some confined to eating and drinking, while by others it was extended to mean the moderating every other pleasure, appetite, inclination, or passion, bodily or mental, even to our avarice and ambition. I proposed to myself, for the sake of clearness, to use rather more names, with fewer ideas annexed to each, than a few names with more ideas; and I included under thirteen names of virtues all that at that time occurred to me as necessary or desirable, and annexed to each a short precept, which fully expressed the extent I gave to its meaning.

These names of virtues, with their precepts were: —

1. Temperance.

Eat not to dullness; drink not to elevation.

2. Silence.

Speak not but what may benefit others or yourself; avoid trifling conversation.

3. Order.

Let all your things have their places; let each part of your business have its time.

4. Resolution.

Resolve to perform what you ought; perform without fail what you resolve.

5. Frugality.

Make no expense but to do good to others or yourself; *i. e.*, waste nothing.

6. Industry.

Lose no time; be always employed in something useful; cut off all unnecessary actions.

7. Sincerity.

Use no hurtful deceit; think innocently and justly; and, if you speak, speak accordingly.

8. Justice.

Wrong none by doing injuries, or omitting the benefits that are your duty.

9. Moderation.

Avoid extremes; forbear resenting injuries so much as you think they deserve.

10. Cleanliness.

Tolerate no uncleanliness in body, cloaths, or habitation.

11. Tranquility.

Be not disturbed at trifles, or at accidents common or unavoidable.

12. Chastity.

13. Humility.

Imitate Jesus and Socrates.

My intention being to acquire the *habitude* of all these virtues, I judged it would be well not to distract my attention by attempting the whole at once, but to fix it on one of them at a time; and, when I should be master of that, then to proceed to another, and so on, till I should have gone through the thirteen; and as the previous acquisition of some might facilitate the acquisition of certain others, I arranged them with that view, as they stand above. Temperance first, as it tends to procure that coolness and clearness of head, which is so necessary where constant vigilance was to be kept up, and guard maintained against the unremitting attraction of ancient habits, and the force of perpetual temptations. This being acquired and established, Silence would be more easy; and my desire being to gain knowledge at the same time that I improved in virtue, and considering that in conversation it was obtained rather by the use of the ears than of the tongue, and therefore wishing to break a habit I was getting into of prattling, punning, and joking, which only made me acceptable to trifling company, I gave *Silence* the second place. This and the next, *Order*, I expected would allow me more time for attending to my project and my studies. *Resolution*, once become habitual, would keep me firm in my endeavors to obtain all the subsequent virtues; *Frugality* and Industry freeing me from my remaining debt, and

producing affluence and independence, would make more easy the practice of Sincerity and Justice, etc., etc. Conceiving then, that, agreeably to the advice of Pythagoras in his Golden Verses, daily examination would be necessary, I contrived the following method for conducting that examination.

I made a little book,[1] in which I allotted a page for each of the virtues. I ruled each page with red ink, so as to have seven columns, one for each day of the week, marking each column with a letter for the day. I crossed these columns with thirteen red lines, marking the beginning of each line with the first letter of one of the virtues, on which line, and in its proper column, I might mark, by a little black spot, every fault I found upon examination to have been committed respecting that virtue upon that day.

TEMPERANCE.

EAT NOT TO DULLNESS.
DRINK NOT TO ELEVATION.

	S.	M.	T.	W.	T.	F.	S
T.							
S.	#	#		#		#	
O.	##	#	#		#	#	#
R.			#			#	
F.		#			#		
I.			#				
S.							
J.							
M.							
C.							
T.							
C.							
H.							

FORM OF THE PAGES

I determined to give a week's strict attention to each of the virtues successively. Thus, in the first week, my great guard was to avoid every the least offense against *Temperance*, leaving the other virtues to their ordinary

[1] In a note by Franklin's grandson the date of this little book, July 1, 1733, is given.

chance, only marking every evening the faults of the day. Thus, if in the first week I could keep my first line, marked T, clear of spots, I supposed the habit of that virtue so much strengthened, and its opposite weakened, that I might venture extending my attention to include the next, and for the following week keep both lines clear of spots. Proceeding thus to the last, I could go through a course complete in thirteen weeks, and four courses in a year. And like him who, having a garden to weed, does not attempt to eradicate all the bad herbs at once, which would exceed his reach and his strength, but works on one of the beds at a time, and, having accomplished the first, proceeds to a second, so I should have, I hoped, the encouraging pleasure of seeing on my pages the progress I made in virtue, by clearing successively my lines of their spots, till in the end, by a number of courses, I should be happy in viewing a clean book, after a thirteen weeks' daily examination.

This my little book had for its motto these lines from Addison's *Cato*: —

> "Here will I hold. If there 's a power above us
> (And that there is, all nature cries aloud
> Through all her works), He must delight in virtue;
> And that which he delights in must be happy."

Another from Cicero,

"O vitæ Philosophia dux! O virtutum indagatrix expultrixque vitiorum! Unus dies, bene et ex præceptis tuis actus, peccanti immortalitati est anteponendus." [1]

[1] O Love of Wisdom, Guide of life, O inculcator of virtues and corrector of faults, one day well spent under the guidance of thy precepts outweighs an immortality of sinning. Cic. *Tusc.* V. 2. 4.

Another from the Proverbs of Solomon, speaking of wisdom or virtue: —

"Length of days is in her right hand, and in her left hand riches and honor. Her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace." iii. 16, 17.

And conceiving God to be the fountain of wisdom, I thought it right and necessary to solicit his assistance for obtaining it; to this end I formed the following little prayer, which was prefixed to my tables of examination, for daily use.

"*O powerful Goodness! bountiful Father! merciful God! Increase in me that wisdom which discovers my truest interest. Strengthen my resolutions to perform what that wisdom dictates. Accept my kind offices to thy other children as the only return in my power for thy continual favors to me.*"

I used also sometimes a little prayer which I took from Thomson's Poems, viz.: —

"Father of light and life, thou Good Supreme!
O teach me what is good; teach me Thyself!
Save me from folly, vanity, and vice,
From every low pursuit; and fill my soul
With knowledge, conscious peace, and virtue pure;
Sacred, substantial, never-fading bliss!"

The precept of *Order* requiring that *every part of my business should have its allotted time*, one page in my little book contained the following scheme of employment for the twenty-four hours of a natural day.

THE MORNING. *Question.* What good shall I do this day?	5 6 7	Rise, wash, and address *Powerful Goodness!* Contrive day's business, and take the resolution of the day; prosecute the present study, and breakfast.
	8 9 10 11	Work.

Noon.	12 1	Read, or overlook my accounts, and dine.
	2 3 4 5	Work.
Evening. *Question.* What good have I done to-day?	6 7 8 9	Put things in their places. Supper. Music or diversion, or conversation. Examination of the day.
Night.	10 11 12 1 2 3 4	Sleep.

I entered upon the execution of this plan for self-examination, and continued it with occasional intermissions for some time. I was surprised to find myself so much fuller of faults than I had imagined; but I had the satisfaction of seeing them diminish. To avoid the trouble of renewing now and then my little book, which, by scraping out the marks on the paper of old faults to make room for new ones in a new course, became full of holes, I transferred my tables and precepts to the ivory leaves of a memorandum book, on which the lines were drawn with red ink, that made a durable stain, and on those lines I marked my faults with a black lead pencil, which marks I could easily wipe out with a wet sponge. After a while I went through one course only in a year, and afterward only one in several years, till at length I omitted them entirely, being employed in voyages and business abroad, with a multiplicity of affairs that interfered; but I always carried my little book with me.

My scheme of ORDER gave me the most trouble; and I found that, though it might be practicable where a man's business was such as to leave him the disposition of his time, that of a journeyman printer, for instance, it was not possible to be exactly observed by a master, who must mix with the world, and often receive people of business at their own hours. *Order*, too, with regard to places for things, papers, etc., I found extremely difficult to acquire. I had not been early accustomed to it, and, having an exceeding good memory, I was not so sensible of the inconvenience attending want of method. This article, therefore, cost me so much painful attention, and my faults in it vexed me so much, and I made so little progress in amendment, and had such frequent relapses, that I was almost ready to give up the attempt, and content myself with a faulty character in that respect, like the man who, in buying an axe of a smith, my neighbor, desired to have the whole of its surface as bright as the edge. The smith consented to grind it bright for him if he would turn the wheel; he turned, while the smith pressed the broad face of the axe hard and heavily on the stone, which made the turning of it very fatiguing. The man came every now and then from the wheel to see how the work went on, and at length would take his axe as it was, without farther grinding. "No," said the smith, "turn on, turn on; we shall have it bright by and by; as yet, it is only speckled." "Yes," says the man, "*but I think I like a speckled axe best.*" And I believe this may have been the case with many, who, having, for want of some such means as I employed, found the difficulty of obtaining good and breaking bad

habits in other points of vice and virtue, have given up the struggle, and concluded that "*a speckled axe was best;*" for something, that pretended to be reason, was every now and then suggesting to me that such extreme nicety as I exacted of myself might be a kind of foppery in morals, which, if it were known, would make me ridiculous; that a perfect character might be attended with the inconvenience of being envied and hated; and that a benevolent man should allow a few faults in himself, to keep his friends in countenance.

In truth, I found myself incorrigible with respect to Order; and now I am grown old, and my memory bad, I feel very sensibly the want of it. But, on the whole, though I never arrived at the perfection I had been so ambitious of obtaining, but fell far short of it, yet I was, by the endeavor, a better and a happier man than I otherwise should have been if I had not attempted it; as those who aim at perfect writing by imitating the engraved copies, though they never reach the wished-for excellence of those copies, their hand is mended by the endeavor, and is tolerable while it continues fair and legible.

It may be well my posterity should be informed that to this little artifice, with the blessing of God, their ancestor owed the constant felicity of his life, down to his 79th year, in which this is written. What reverses may attend the remainder is in the hand of Providence; but, if they arrive, the reflection on past happiness enjoyed ought to help his bearing them with more resignation. To Temperance he ascribes his long-continued health, and what is still left to him of a good constitution; to Industry and Frugality, the early easiness of his circum-

stances and acquisition of his fortune, with all that knowledge that enabled him to be a useful citizen, and obtained for him some degree of reputation among the learned; to Sincerity and Justice, the confidence of his country and the honorable employs it conferred upon him; and to the joint influence of the whole mass of the virtues, even in the imperfect state he was able to acquire them, all that evenness of temper, and that cheerfulness in conversation, which makes his company still sought for, and agreeable even to his younger acquaintance. I hope, therefore, that some of my descendants may follow the example and reap the benefit.

It will be remarked that, though my scheme was not wholly without religion, there was in it no mark of any of the distinguishing tenets of any particular sect. I had purposely avoided them; for, being fully persuaded of the utility and excellency of my method, and that it might be serviceable to people in all religions, and intending some time or other to publish it, I would not have anything in it that should prejudice any one, of any sect, against it. I purposed writing a little comment on each virtue, in which I would have shown the advantages of possessing it, and the mischiefs attending its opposite vice; and I should have called my book THE ART OF VIRTUE,[1] because it would have shown the means and manner of obtaining virtue, which would have distinguished it from the mere exhortation to be good, that does not instruct and indicate the means, but is like the apostle's man of verbal charity, who only without showing to the naked and hungry how or where they might

[1] A marginal note reads, "Nothing so likely to make a man's fortune as Virtue."

get clothes or victuals exhorted them to be fed and clothed. — James ii. 15, 16.

But it so happened that my intention of writing and publishing this comment was never fulfilled. I did, indeed, from time to time, put down short hints of the sentiments, reasonings, etc., to be made use of in it, some of which I have still by me; but the necessary close attention to private business in the earlier part of my life, and public business since, have occasioned my postponing it; for, it being connected in my mind with *a great and extensive project*, that required the whole man to execute, and which an unforeseen succession of employs prevented my attending to, it has hitherto remained unfinished.

In this piece it was my design to explain and enforce this doctrine, that vicious actions are not hurtful because they are forbidden, but forbidden because they are hurtful, the nature of man alone considered; and it was, therefore, every one's interest to be virtuous who wished to be happy even in this world; and I should, from this circumstance (there being always in the world a number of rich merchants, nobility, states, and princes, who have need of honest instruments for the management of their affairs, and such being so rare), have endeavored to convince young persons that no qualities were so likely to make a poor man's fortune as those of probity and integrity.

My list of virtues contained at first but twelve; but a Quaker friend having kindly informed me that I was generally thought proud; that my pride showed itself frequently in conversation; that I was not content with being in the right when discussing any point, but was

overbearing, and rather insolent, of which he convinced me by mentioning several instances; I determined endeavoring to cure myself, if I could, of this vice or folly among the rest, and I added *Humility* to my list, giving an extensive meaning to the word.

I cannot boast of much success in acquiring the *reality* of this virtue, but I had a good deal with regard to the *appearance* of it. I made it a rule to forbear all direct contradiction to the sentiments of others, and all positive assertion of my own. I even forbid myself, agreeably to the old laws of our Junto, the use of every word or expression in the language that imported a fixed opinion, such as *certainly*, *undoubtedly*, etc., and I adopted, instead of them, *I conceive*, *I apprehend*, or *I imagine* a thing to be so or so; or it *so appears to me at present*. When another asserted something that I thought an error, I denied myself the pleasure of contradicting him abruptly, and of showing immediately some absurdity in his proposition; and in answering I began by observing that in certain cases or circumstances his opinion would be right, but in the present case there *appeared* or *seemed* to me some difference, etc. I soon found the advantage of this change in my manner; the conversations I engaged in went on more pleasantly. The modest way in which I proposed my opinions procured them a readier reception and less contradiction; I had less mortification when I was found to be in the wrong, and I more easily prevailed with others to give up their mistakes and join with me when I happened to be in the right.

And this mode, which I at first put on with some violence to natural inclination, became at length so easy,

and so habitual to me, that perhaps for these fifty years past no one has ever heard a dogmatical expression escape me. And to this habit (after my character of integrity) I think it principally owing that I had early so much weight with my fellow-citizens when I proposed new institutions, or alterations in the old, and so much influence in public councils when I became a member; for I was but a bad speaker, never eloquent, subject to much hesitation in my choice of words, hardly correct in language, and yet I generally carried my points.

In reality, there is, perhaps, no one of our natural passions so hard to subdue as *pride*. Disguise it, struggle with it, beat it down, stifle it, mortify it as much as one pleases, it is still alive, and will every now and then peep out and show itself; you will see it, perhaps, often in this history; for, even if I could conceive that I had completely overcome it, I should probably be proud of my humility.

[Thus far written at Passy, 1784.]

[I am now about to write at home, August, 1788, but cannot have the help expected from my papers, many of them being lost in the war. I have, however, found the following.][1]

Having mentioned *a great and extensive project* which I had conceived, it seems proper that some account should be here given of that project and its object. Its first rise in my mind appears in the following little paper, accidentally preserved, viz.: —

Observations on my reading history, in Library, May 19, 1731.

[1] Written in the margin in the original manuscript.

"That the great affairs of the world, the wars, revolutions, etc., are carried on and affected by parties.

"That the view of these parties is their present general interest, or what they take to be such.

"That the different views of these different parties occasion all confusion.

"That while a party is carrying on a general design, each man has his particular private interest in view.

"That as soon as a party has gained its general point, each member becomes intent upon his particular interest; which, thwarting others, breaks that party into divisions, and occasions more confusion.

"That few in public affairs act from a mere view of the good of their country, whatever they may pretend; and, though their actings bring real good to their country, yet men primarily considered that their own and their country's interest was united, and did not act from a principle of benevolence.

"That fewer still, in public affairs, act with a view to the good of mankind.

"There seems to me at present to be great occasion for raising a United Party for Virtue, by forming the virtuous and good men of all nations into a regular body, to be governed by suitable, good, and wise rules, which good and wise men may probably be more unanimous in their obedience to, than common people are to common laws.

"I at present think that whoever attempts this aright, and is well qualified, cannot fail of pleasing God, and of meeting with success. B. F."

Revolving this project in my mind, as to be undertaken

hereafter, when my circumstances should afford me the necessary leisure, I put down from time to time, on pieces of paper, such thoughts as occurred to me respecting it. Most of these are lost; but I find one purporting to be the substance of an intended creed, containing, as I thought, the essentials of every known religion, and being free of everything that might shock the professors of any religion. It is expressed in these words, viz.: [1] —

"That there is one God, who made all things.

"That He governs the world by his providence.

"That He ought to be worshipped by adoration, prayer, and thanksgiving.

"But that the most acceptable service of God is doing good to man.

"That the soul is immortal.

"And that God will certainly reward virtue and punish vice, either here or hereafter."

My ideas at that time were that the sect should be begun and spread at first among young and single men only; that each person to be initiated should not only declare his assent to such creed, but should have exercised himself with the thirteen weeks' examination and practice of the virtues, as in the before-mentioned model; that the existence of such a society should be kept a secret, till it was become considerable, to prevent solicitations for the admission of improper persons, but that the members should each of them search among his acquaintance for ingenuous, well-disposed youths, to whom, with prudent caution, the scheme should be gradu-

[1] This creed is essentially the same as the expression of religious belief written by Franklin in his eighty-fifth year in answer to a request made by an old friend, President Ezra Stiles, of Yale College. A quotation from this letter is given on p. 368.

ally communicated; that the members should engage to afford their advice, assistance, and support to each other in promoting one another's interests, business, and advancement in life; that, for distinction, we should be called *The Society of the Free and Easy:* free, as being, by the general practice and habit of the virtues, free from the dominion of vice; and particularly by the practice of industry and frugality, free from debt, which exposes a man to confinement, and a species of slavery to his creditors.

This is as much as I can now recollect of the project, except that I communicated it in part to two young men, who adopted it with some enthusiasm; but my then narrow circumstances, and the necessity I was under of sticking close to my business, occasioned my postponing the further prosecution of it at that time; and my multifarious occupations, public and private, induced me to continue postponing, so that it has been omitted till I have no longer strength or activity left sufficient for such an enterprise; though I am still of opinion that it was a practicable scheme, and might have been very useful, by forming a great number of good citizens; and I was not discouraged by the seeming magnitude of the undertaking, as I have always thought that one man of tolerable abilities may work great changes, and accomplish great affairs among mankind, if he first forms a good plan, and, cutting off all amusements or other employments that would divert his attention, makes the execution of that same plan his sole study and business.

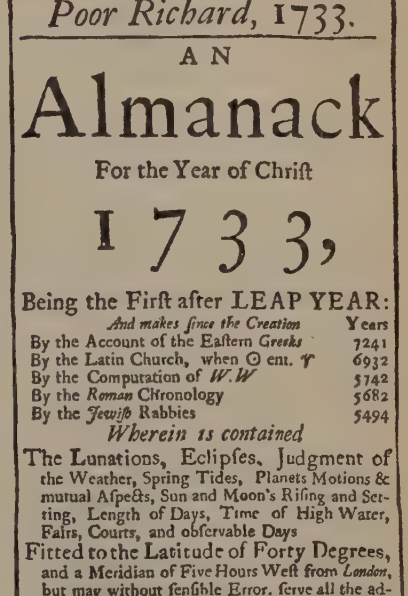
In 1732 I first published my Almanac, under the

name of *Richard Saunders;* it was continued by me about twenty-five years, commonly called *Poor Richard's Almanac.* I endeavored to make it both entertaining and useful; and it accordingly came to be in such demand, that I reaped considerable profit from it, vending annually near ten thousand. And observing that it was generally read, scarce any neighborhood in the province being without it, I considered it as a proper vehicle for conveying instruction among the common people, who bought scarcely any other books; I therefore filled all the little spaces that occurred between the remarkable days in the calendar with proverbial sentences, chiefly such as inculcated industry and frugality as the means of procuring wealth, and thereby securing virtue; it being more difficult for a man in want to act always honestly, as, to use here one of those proverbs, *it is hard for an empty sack to stand upright.*

These proverbs, which contained the wisdom of many ages and nations, I assembled and formed into a connected discourse prefixed to the Almanac of 1757, as the harangue of a wise old man to the people attending an auction. The bringing all these scattered counsels thus into a focus enabled them to make greater impression. The piece, being universally approved, was copied in all the newspapers of the Continent; reprinted in Britain on a broadside, to be stuck up in houses; two translations were made of it in French, and great numbers bought by the clergy and gentry, to distribute gratis among their poor parishioners and tenants. In Pennsylvania, as it discouraged useless expense in foreign superfluities, some thought it had its share of influence in

producing that growing plenty of money which was observable for several years after its publication.

I considered my newspaper, also, as another means of communicating instruction, and in that view frequently reprinted in it extracts from the *Spectator*, and other moral writers; and sometimes published little pieces of my own, which had been first composed for reading in our Junto. Of these are a Socratic dialogue, tending to prove that, whatever might be his parts and abilities, a vicious man could not properly be called a man of sense; and a discourse on self-denial, showing that virtue was not secure till its practice became a habitude, and was free from the opposition of contrary inclinations. These may be found in the papers about the beginning of 1735.



Poor Richard, 1733.

AN

Almanack

For the Year of Christ

1733,

Being the First after LEAP YEAR:

	And makes since the Creation	Years
By the Account of the Eastern *Greeks*		7241
By the Latin Church, when ☉ ent. ♈		6932
By the Computation of *W. W*		5742
By the *Roman* Chronology		5682
By the *Jewish* Rabbies		5494

Wherein is contained

The Lunations, Eclipses, Judgment of the Weather, Spring Tides, Planets Motions & mutual Aspects, Sun and Moon's Rising and Setting, Length of Days, Time of High Water, Fairs, Courts, and observable Days

Fitted to the Latitude of Forty Degrees, and a Meridian of Five Hours West from *London*, but may without sensible Error, serve all the adjacent Places, even from *Newfoundland* to *South-Carolina*.

By *RICHARD SAUNDERS*, Philom.

PHILADELPHIA:

Printed and sold by *B. FRANKLIN*, at the New Printing Office near the Market.

The Third Impression.

REDUCED FAC-SIMILE OF THE TITLE-PAGE OF POOR RICHARD'S ALMANAC

In the conduct of my newspaper, I carefully excluded all libelling and personal abuse, which is of late years become so disgraceful to our country. Whenever I was solicited to insert anything of that kind, and the writers pleaded, as they generally did, the liberty of the press, and that a newspaper was like a stage-coach, in which any one who would pay had a right to a place, my answer was, that I would print the piece separately if desired, and the author might have as many copies as he pleased to distribute himself, but that I would not take upon me to spread his detraction; and that, having contracted with my subscribers to furnish them with what might be either useful or entertaining, I could not fill their papers with private altercation, in which they had no concern, without doing them manifest injustice. Now, many of our printers make no scruple of gratifying the malice of individuals by false accusations of the fairest characters among ourselves, augmenting animosity even to the producing of duels; and are, moreover, so indiscreet as to print scurrilous reflections on the government of neighboring states, and even on the conduct of our best national allies, which may be attended with the most pernicious consequences. These things I mention as a caution to young printers, and that they may be encouraged not to pollute their presses and disgrace their profession by such infamous practices, but refuse steadily, as they may see by my example that such a course of conduct will not, on the whole, be injurious to their interests.

In 1733 I sent one of my journeymen to Charleston, South Carolina, where a printer was wanting. I furnished

him with a press and letters, on an agreement of partnership, by which I was to receive one third of the profits of the business, paying one third of the expense. He was a man of learning, and honest but ignorant in matters of account; and, though he sometimes made me remittances, I could get no account from him, nor any satisfactory state of our partnership while he lived. On his decease, the business was continued by his widow, who, being born and bred in Holland, where, as I have been informed, the knowledge of accounts makes a part of female education, she not only sent me as clear a state as she could find of the transactions past, but continued to account with the greatest regularity and exactness every quarter afterwards, and managed the business with such success, that she not only brought up reputably a family of children, but, at the expiration of the term, was able to purchase of me the printing-house, and establish her son in it.

I mention this affair chiefly for the sake of recommending that branch of education for our young females, as likely to be of more use to them and their children, in case of widowhood, than either music or dancing, by preserving them from losses by imposition of crafty men, and enabling them to continue, perhaps, a profitable mercantile house, with established correspondence, till a son is grown up fit to undertake and go on with it, to the lasting advantage and enriching of the family.

About the year 1734 there arrived among us from Ireland a young Presbyterian preacher, named Hemphill, who delivered with a good voice, and apparently extempore, most excellent discourses, which drew to-

gether considerable numbers of different persuasions, who joined in admiring them. Among the rest, I became one of his constant hearers, his sermons pleasing me, as they had little of the dogmatical kind, but inculcated strongly the practice of virtue, or what in the religious style are called good works. Those, however, of our congregation, who considered themselves as orthodox Presbyterians, disapproved his doctrine, and were joined by most of the old clergy, who arraigned him of heterodoxy before the synod, in order to have him silenced. I became his zealous partisan, and contributed all I could to raise a party in his favor, and we combated for him a while with some hopes of success. There was much scribbling *pro* and *con* upon the occasion; and finding that, though an elegant preacher, he was but a poor writer, I lent him my pen and wrote for him two or three pamphlets, and one piece in the *Gazette* of April, 1735. Those pamphlets, as is generally the case with controversial writings, though eagerly read at the time, were soon out of vogue, and I question whether a single copy of them now exists.

During the contest an unlucky occurrence hurt his cause exceedingly. One of our adversaries having heard him preach a sermon that was much admired, thought he had somewhere read the sermon before, or at least a part of it. On search, he found that part quoted at length, in one of the *British Reviews*, from a discourse of Dr. Foster's. This detection gave many of our party disgust, who accordingly abandoned his cause, and occasioned our more speedy discomfiture in the synod. I stuck by him, however, as I rather approved his giving us good sermons composed by others, than bad ones of

his own manufacture, though the latter was the practice of our common teachers. He afterward acknowledged to me that none of those he preached were his own ; adding, that his memory was such as enabled him to retain and repeat any sermon after one reading only. On our defeat, he left us in search elsewhere of better fortune, and I quitted the congregation, never joining it after, though I continued many years my subscription for the support of its ministers.[1]

I had begun in 1733 to study languages ; I soon made myself so much a master of the French as to be able to read the books with ease. I then undertook the Italian. An acquaintance, who was also learning it, used often to tempt me to play chess with him. Finding this took up too much of the time I had to spare for study, I at length refused to play any more, unless on this condition, that the victor in every game should have a right to impose a task, either in parts of the grammar to be got by heart, or in translations, etc., which tasks the vanquished was to perform upon honor, before our next meeting. As we played pretty equally, we thus beat one another into that language. I afterwards, with a little painstaking, acquired as much of the Spanish as to read their books also.

I have already mentioned that I had only one year's instruction in a Latin school, and that when very young, after which I neglected that language entirely. But when I had attained an acquaintance with the French, Italian, and Spanish, I was surprised to find, on looking

[1] In a letter to Ezra Stiles, President of Yale College, quoted, p. 368, Franklin wrote : " All sects here . . . have experienced my good will in assisting them with my subscriptions for building their new places of worship." He also had a pew in church, and wished his daughter to attend regularly.

over a Latin Testament, that I understood so much more of that language than I had imagined, which encouraged me to apply myself again to the study of it, and I met with more success, as those preceding languages had greatly smoothed my way.

From these circumstances, I have thought that there is some inconsistency in our common mode of teaching languages. We are told that it is proper to begin first with the Latin, and, having acquired that, it will be more easy to attain those modern languages which are derived from it; and yet we do not begin with the Greek, in order more easily to acquire the Latin. It is true that, if you can clamber and get to the top of a staircase without using the steps, you will more easily gain them in descending; but certainly, if you begin with the lowest you will with more ease ascend to the top; and I would therefore offer it to the consideration of those who superintend the education of our youth, whether, since many of those who begin with the Latin quit the same after spending some years without having made any great proficiency, and what they have learned becomes almost useless, so that their time has been lost, it would not have been better to have begun with the French, proceeding to the Italian, etc.; for, though, after spending the same time, they should quit the study of languages and never arrive at the Latin, they would, however, have acquired another tongue or two, that, being in modern use, might be serviceable to them in common life.

After ten years' absence from Boston, and having become easy in my circumstances, I made a journey thither to visit my relations, which I could not sooner well

afford. In returning, I called at Newport to see my brother, then settled there with his printing-house. Our former differences were forgotten, and our meeting was very cordial and affectionate. He was fast declining in his health, and requested of me that, in case of his death, which he apprehended not far distant, I would take home his son, then but ten years of age, and bring him up to the printing business. This I accordingly performed, sending him a few years to school before I took him into the office. His mother carried on the business till he was grown up, when I assisted him with an assortment of new types, those of his father being in a manner worn out. Thus it was that I made my brother ample amends for the service I had deprived him of by leaving him so early.

In 1736 I lost one of my sons, a fine boy of four years old, by the small-pox, taken in the common way. I long regretted bitterly, and still regret that I had not given it to him by inoculation.[1] This I mention for the sake of parents who omit that operation, on the supposition that they should never forgive themselves if the child died under it; my example showing that the regret may be the same either way, and that, therefore, the safer should be chosen.

Our club, the Junto, was found so useful, and afforded such satisfaction to the members, that several were desirous of introducing their friends, which could not well be done without exceeding what we had settled as a con-

[1] The rumor having spread that his son had died from inoculation, at that time but little practised, Franklin announced in his paper that such was not the case and urged parents not to neglect this precaution. He had deferred inoculating his own son on account of an illness which had weakened the child.

venient number, viz., twelve. We had from the beginning made it a rule to keep our institution a secret, which was pretty well observed; the intention was to avoid applications of improper persons for admittance, some of whom, perhaps, we might find it difficult to refuse. I was one of those who were against any addition to our number, but, instead of it, made in writing a proposal that every member separately should endeavor to form a subordinate club, with the same rules respecting queries, etc., and without informing them of the connection with the Junto. The advantages proposed were, the improvement of so many more young citizens by the use of our institutions; our better acquaintance with the general sentiments of the inhabitants on any occasion, as the Junto member might propose what queries we should desire, and was to report to the Junto what passed in his separate club; the promotion of our particular interests in business by more extensive recommendation, and the increase of our influence in public affairs, and our power of doing good by spreading through the several clubs the sentiments of the Junto.

The project was approved, and every member undertook to form his club, but they did not all succeed. Five or six only were completed, which were called by different names, as the Vine, the Union, the Band, etc. They were useful to themselves, and afforded us a good deal of amusement, information, and instruction, besides answering, in some considerable degree, our views of influencing the public opinion on particular occasions, of which I shall give some instances in course of time as they happened.

VII. The Self-Made Man (*continued*)

1736–1748

Franklin's Outline. Post-office. Spotswood. Bradford's Behavior. Clerk of Assembly. Lose one of my Sons. Project of subordinate Juntos. Write occasionally in the papers. Success in Business. Fire companies. Engines. Go again to Boston in 1743. See Dr. Spence. Whitefield. My connection with him. His generosity to me. My returns. Church Differences. My part in them.

My first promotion was my being chosen, in 1736, clerk of the General Assembly. The choice was made that year without opposition; but the year following, when I was again proposed (the choice, like that of the members, being annual), a new member made a long speech against me, in order to favor some other candidate. I was, however, chosen, which was the more agreeable to me, as, besides the pay for the immediate service as clerk, the place gave me a better opportunity of keeping up an interest among the members, which secured to me the business of printing the votes, laws, paper money, and other occasional jobs for the public, that, on the whole, were very profitable.

I therefore did not like the opposition of this new member, who was a gentleman of fortune and education, with talents that were likely to give him, in time, great influence in the House, which indeed afterwards happened. I did not, however, aim at gaining his favor by paying any servile respect to him, but, after some time, took this other method. Having heard that he had in his library a certain very scarce and curious book, I wrote a

note to him, expressing my desire of perusing that book, and requesting he would do me the favor of lending it to me for a few days. He sent it immediately, and I returned it in about a week with another note, expressing strongly my sense of the favor. When we next met in the House, he spoke to me (which he had never done before), and with great civility; and he ever after manifested a readiness to serve me on all occasions, so that we became great friends, and our friendship continued to his death. This is another instance of the truth of an old maxim I had learned, which says, "*He that has once done you a kindness will be more ready to do you another, than he whom you yourself have obliged.*" And it shows how much more profitable it is prudently to remove, than to resent, return, and continue inimical proceedings.

In 1737, Colonel Spotswood, late governor of Virginia, and then postmaster-general, being dissatisfied with the conduct of his deputy [1] at Philadelphia, respecting some negligence in rendering, and inexactitude of his accounts, took from him the commission and offered it to me. I accepted it readily, and found it of great advantage; for though the salary was small it facilitated the correspondence that improved my newspaper, increased the number demanded, as well as the advertisements to be inserted, so that it came to afford me a considerable income. My old competitor's newspaper declined proportionably, and I was satisfied without retaliating his refusal, while postmaster, to permit my papers being carried by the riders.

[1] The deputy who was deprived of his position was Bradford, Franklin's rival. The privilege of free postage had been allowed him on condition of keeping up the office according to directions. Franklin forwarded his papers free until positively forbidden to do so by the Deputy Postmaster for the colonies.

Thus he suffered greatly from his neglect in due accounting; and I mention it as a lesson to those young men who may be employed in managing affairs for others, that they should always render accounts, and make remittances, with great clearness and punctuality. The character of observing such a conduct is the most powerful of all recommendations to new employments and increase of business.

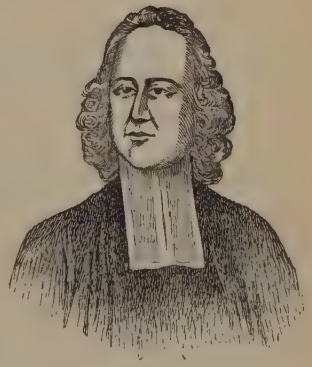
I began now to turn my thoughts a little to public affairs, beginning, however, with small matters. The city watch was one of the first things that I conceived to want regulation. It was managed by the constables of the respective wards in turn; the constable warned a number of housekeepers to attend him for the night. Those who chose never to attend paid him six shillings a year to be excused, which was supposed to be for hiring substitutes, but was, in reality, much more than was necessary for that purpose, and made the constableship a place of profit; and the constable, for a little drink, often got such ragamuffins about him as a watch, that respectable housekeepers did not choose to mix with. Walking the rounds, too, was often neglected, and most of the nights spent in tippling. I thereupon wrote a paper to be read in Junto, representing these irregularities, but insisting more particularly on the inequality of this six-shilling tax of the constables, respecting the circumstances of those who paid it, since a poor widow housekeeper, all whose property to be guarded by the watch did not perhaps exceed the value of fifty pounds, paid as much as the wealthiest merchant, who had thousands of pounds' worth of goods in his stores.

On the whole, I proposed as a more effectual watch, the hiring of proper men to serve constantly in that business; and as a more equitable way of supporting the charge, the levying a tax should be proportioned to the property. This idea, being approved by the Junto, was communicated to the other clubs, but as arising in each of them; and though the plan was not immediately carried into execution, yet, by preparing the minds of people for the change, it paved the way for the law obtained a few years after, when the members of our clubs were grown into more influence.

About this time I wrote a paper (first to be read in Junto, but it was afterward published) on the different accidents and carelessnesses by which houses were set on fire, with cautions against them, and means proposed of avoiding them. This was much spoken of as a useful piece, and gave rise to a project, which soon followed it, of forming a company for the more ready extinguishing of fires, and mutual assistance in removing and securing of goods when in danger. Associates in this scheme were presently found, amounting to thirty. Our articles of agreement obliged every member to keep always in good order, and fit for use, a certain number of leather buckets, with strong bags and baskets (for packing and transporting of goods), which were to be brought to every fire; and we agreed to meet once a month and spend a social evening together, in discoursing and communicating such ideas as occurred to us upon the subject of fires, as might be useful in our conduct on such occasions.

The utility of this institution soon appeared, and many more desiring to be admitted than we thought convenient

for one company, they were advised to form another, which was accordingly done; and this went on, one new company being formed after another, till they became so numerous as to include most of the inhabitants who were men of property; and now, at the time of my writing this, though upward of fifty years since its establishment, that which I first formed, called the Union Fire Company, still subsists and flourishes, though the first members are all deceased but myself and one, who is older by a year than I am. The small fines that have been paid by members for absence at the monthly meetings have been applied to the purchase of fire-engines, ladders, fire-hooks, and other useful implements for each company, so that I question whether there is a city in the world better provided with the means of putting a stop to beginning conflagrations; and, in fact, since these institutions, the city has never lost by fire more than one or two houses at a time, and the flames have often been extinguished before the house in which they began had been half consumed.



GEORGE WHITEFIELD

In 1739 arrived among us from Ireland the Reverend Mr. Whitefield, who had made himself remarkable there as an itinerant preacher. He was at first permitted to preach in some of our churches; but the clergy, taking a

dislike to him, soon refused him their pulpits, and he was obliged to preach in the fields. The multitudes of all sects and denominations that attended his sermons were enormous, and it was matter of speculation to me, who was one of the number, to observe the extraordinary influence of his oratory on his hearers, and how much they admired and respected him, notwithstanding his common abuse of them, by assuring them they were naturally *half beasts and half devils*. It was wonderful to see the change soon made in the manners of our inhabitants. From being thoughtless or indifferent about religion, it seemed as if all the world were growing religious, so that one could not walk through the town in an evening without hearing psalms sung in different families of every street.

And it being found inconvenient to assemble in the open air, subject to its inclemencies, the building of a house to meet in was no sooner proposed, and persons appointed to receive contributions, but sufficient sums were soon received to procure the ground and erect the building, which was one hundred feet long and seventy broad, about the size of Westminster Hall; and the work was carried on with such spirit as to be finished in a much shorter time than could have been expected. Both house and ground were vested in trustees, expressly for the use of any preacher of any religious persuasion who might desire to say something to the people at Philadelphia; the design in building not being to accommodate any particular sect, but the inhabitants in general; so that even if the Mufti of Constantinople were to send a missionary to preach Mohammedanism to us, he would find a pulpit at his service.

Mr. Whitefield, in leaving us, went preaching all the way through the Colonies to Georgia. The settlement of that province had lately been begun, but, instead of being made with hardy, industrious husbandmen accustomed to labor, the only people fit for such an enterprise, it was with families of broken shopkeepers and other insolvent debtors, many of indolent and idle habits, taken out of the jails, who, being set down in the woods, unqualified for clearing land, and unable to endure the hardships of a new settlement, perished in numbers, leaving many helpless children unprovided for. The sight of their miserable situation inspired the benevolent heart of Mr. Whitefield with the idea of building an Orphan House there, in which they might be supported and educated. Returning northward, he preached up this charity, and made large collections, for his eloquence had a wonderful power over the hearts and purses of his hearers, of which I myself was an instance.

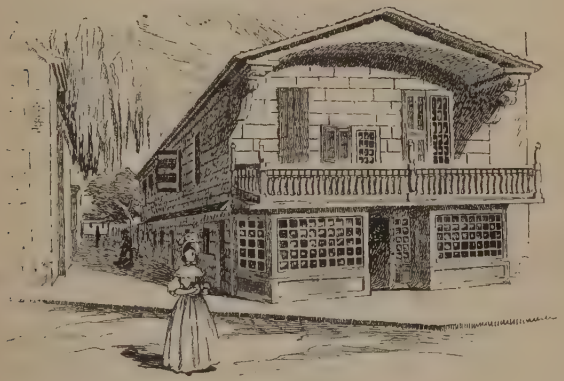
I did not disapprove of the design, but, as Georgia was then destitute of materials and workmen, and it was proposed to send them from Philadelphia at a great expense, I thought it would have been better to have built the house here, and brought the children to it. This I advised; but he was resolute in his first project, rejected my counsel, and I therefore refused to contribute. I happened soon after to attend one of his sermons, in the course of which I perceived he intended to finish with a collection, and I silently resolved he should get nothing from me. I had in my pocket a handful of copper money, three or four silver dollars, and five pistoles in gold. As he proceeded I began to soften, and concluded to give

the coppers. Another stroke of his oratory made me ashamed of that, and determined me to give the silver; and he finished so admirably, that I emptied my pocket wholly into the collector's dish, gold and all. At this sermon there was also one of our club, who, being of my sentiments respecting the building in Georgia, and suspecting a collection might be intended, had, by precaution, emptied his pockets before he came from home. Toward the conclusion of the discourse, however, he felt a strong desire to give, and applied to a neighbor, who stood near him, to borrow some money for the purpose. The application was unfortunately [made] to perhaps the only man in the company who had the firmness not to be affected by the preacher. His answer was, "*At any other time, Friend Hopkinson, I would lend to thee freely; but not now, for thee seems to be out of thy right senses.*"

Some of Mr. Whitefield's enemies affected to suppose that he would apply these collections to his own private emolument; but I, who was intimately acquainted with him (being employed in printing his Sermons and Journals, etc.), never had the least suspicion of his integrity, but am to this day decidedly of opinion that he was in all his conduct a perfectly *honest man;* and methinks my testimony in his favor ought to have the more weight, as we had no religious connection. He used, indeed, sometimes to pray for my conversion, but never had the satisfaction of believing that his prayers were heard. Ours was a mere civil friendship, sincere on both sides, and lasted to his death.[1]

[1] Whitefield died in 1770, in Newburyport, in the Colony of Massachusetts.

The following instance will show something of the terms on which we stood. Upon one of his arrivals from England at Boston he wrote to me that he should come soon to Philadelphia, but knew not where he could lodge when there, as he understood his old friend and host, Mr. Benezet, was removed to Germantown. My



LOXLEY HOUSE

Whitefield preached from the gallery of this house

answer was, "You know my house; if you can make shift with its scanty accommodations, you will be most heartily welcome." He replied, that if I made that kind offer for Christ's sake, I should not miss of a reward. And I returned, "*Don't let me be mistaken; it was not for Christ's sake, but for your sake.*" One of our common acquaintance jocosely remarked, that, knowing it to be the custom of the saints, when they received any favor, to shift the burden of the obligation from off their

own shoulders, and place it in heaven, I had contrived to fix it on earth.

The last time I saw Mr. Whitefield was in London, when he consulted me about his Orphan House concern, and his purpose of appropriating it to the establishment of a college.

He had a loud and clear voice, and articulated his words and sentences so perfectly, that he might be heard and understood at a great distance, especially as his auditories, however numerous, observed the most exact silence. He preached one evening from the top of the Court-House steps,[1] which are in the middle of Market Street, and on the west side of Second Street, which crosses it at right angles. Both streets were filled with his hearers to a considerable distance. Being among the hindmost in Market Street, I had the curiosity to learn how far he could be heard, by retiring backwards down the street towards the river; and I found his voice distinct till I came near Front Street, when some noise in that street obscured it. Imagining then a semicircle, of which my distance should be the radius, and that it were filled with auditors, to each of whom I allowed two square feet, I computed that he might well be heard by more than thirty thousand. This reconciled me to the newspaper accounts of his having preached to twenty-five thousand people in the fields, and to the ancient histories of generals haranguing whole armies, of which I had sometimes doubted.

By hearing him often, I came to distinguish easily between sermons newly composed, and those which he

[1] Court-house is shown in picture on p. 35.

had often preached in the course of his travels. His delivery of the latter was so improved by frequent repetitions that every accent, every emphasis, every modulation of voice was so perfectly well turned and well placed, that, without being interested in the subject, one could not help being pleased with the discourse; a pleasure of much the same kind with that received from an excellent piece of music. This is an advantage itinerant preachers have over those who are stationary, as the latter cannot well improve their delivery of a sermon by so many rehearsals.

His writing and printing from time to time gave great advantage to his enemies; unguarded expressions, and even erroneous opinions, delivered in preaching, might have been afterwards explained or qualified by supposing others that might have accompanied them, or they might have been denied; but *litera scripta manet.* Critics attacked his writings violently, and with so much appearance of reason as to diminish the number of his votaries and prevent their increase; so that I am of opinion if he had never written anything, he would have left behind him a much more numerous and important sect, and his reputation might in that case have been still growing, even after his death, as there being nothing of his writing on which to found a censure and give him a lower character, his proselytes would be left at liberty to feign for him as great a variety of excellencies as their enthusiastic admiration might wish him to have possessed.

My business was now continually augmenting, and my circumstances growing daily easier, my newspaper having become very profitable, as being for a time al-

most the only one in this and the neighboring provinces. I experienced, too, the truth of the observation, "*that after getting the first hundred pound, it is more easy to get the second*," money itself being of a prolific nature.

The partnership at Carolina having succeeded, I was encouraged to engage in others, and to promote several of my workmen, who had behaved well, by establishing them with printing-houses in different colonies, on the same terms with that in Carolina. Most of them did well, being enabled at the end of our term, six years, to purchase the types of me and go on working for themselves, by which means several families were raised. Partnerships often finish in quarrels; but I was happy in this, that mine were all carried on and ended amicably, owing, I think, a good deal to the precaution of having very explicitly settled, in our articles, everything to be done by or expected from each partner, so that there was nothing to dispute; which precaution I would therefore recommend to all who enter into partnerships; for, whatever esteem partners may have for, and confidence in each other at the time of the contract, little jealousies and disgusts may arise, with ideas of inequality in the care and burden of the business, etc., which are attended often with breach of friendship and of the connection, perhaps with lawsuits and other disagreeable consequences.

VIII. Citizen of Philadelphia

1748–1753

Comment. Franklin's life was sharply divided into periods: his youth; his year or more of wandering and adventure; his appearance in business, marriage, and active participation in the public affairs of the community. This period of Franklin's life shows him at the beginning of those greater activities which came to fill the years after his retirement from business; several points are of interest to those who would learn of him the secret of continued advancement in life and prolonged activity in age. Early in his career, he turned his attention to those small affairs near at hand which affected his own welfare and that of his neighbors; such were the support of a small library, a better school, better management of the city watch, protection of property from fire. From each of these Franklin hoped to gain some personal advantage, it is true, but he might have provided for himself alone for a small part of the effort and money the public institution cost him. We see here an important characteristic of the man, namely, his habit of considering his own need as, in a larger sense, the need of his fellow-citizens. He did not rest until he had devised a plan broad enough to meet the requirement of all in the same case as himself.

In these enterprises he displayed another quality for which he was perhaps more remarkable than any other man in his generation. He did not content himself with small schemes which would benefit the community for a few years only; he had a rare prevision of the future greatness of his city and country, and with this in view he devised for each enterprise some permanent form of organization not dependent upon himself or any single group of promoters for continuation. Thus, from the small beginnings spoken of in this chapter have come

down to us great institutions which are, to-day, modern and an essential part of the life of our nation. D.

Franklin's Outline. Propose a College. Not then prosecuted. Propose and establish a Philosophical Society. War. Electricity. My first knowledge of it. Partnership with D. Hall, &c. Dispute in Assembly upon Defence. Project for it. Plain Truth. Its success. Ten thousand Men raised and disciplined. Lotteries. Battery built. New Castle. My influence in the Council. Colors, Devices, and Mottoes. Ladies' Military Watch. Quakers chosen of the Common Council.

I had, on the whole, abundant reason to be satisfied with my being established in Pennsylvania. There were, however, two things that I regretted, there being no provision for defence, nor for a complete education of youth; no militia, nor any college. I therefore, in 1743, drew up a proposal for establishing an academy; and at that time, thinking the Reverend Mr. Peters, who was out of employ, a fit person to superintend such an institution, I communicated the project to him; but he, having more profitable views in the service of the proprietaries, which succeeded, declined the undertaking; and, not knowing another at that time suitable for such a trust, I let the scheme lie a while dormant. I succeeded better the next year, 1744, in proposing and establishing a Philosophical Society. The paper I wrote for that purpose will be found among my writings, when collected.

With respect to defence, Spain having been several years at war against Great Britain, and being at length joined by France, which brought us into great danger, and the labored and long-continued endeavor of our governor, Thomas, to prevail with our Quaker Assembly to

pass a militia law, and make other provisions for the security of the province, having proved abortive, I determined to try what might be done by a voluntary association of the people. To promote this, I first wrote and published a pamphlet, entitled PLAIN TRUTH, in which I stated our defenceless situation in strong lights, with the necessity of union and discipline for our defence, and promised to propose in a few days an association, to be generally signed for that purpose. The pamphlet had a sudden and surprising effect. I was called upon for the instrument of association, and having settled the draft of it with a few friends, I appointed a meeting of the citizens in the large building before mentioned. The house was pretty full; I had prepared a number of printed copies, and provided pens and ink dispersed all over the room. I harangued them a little on the subject, read the paper, and explained it, and then distributed the copies, which were eagerly signed, not the least objection being made.

When the company separated, and the papers were collected, we found above twelve hundred hands; and other copies being dispersed in the country, the subscribers amounted at length to upward of ten thousand. These all furnished themselves as soon as they could with arms, formed themselves into companies and regiments, chose their own officers, and met every week to be instructed in the manual exercise, and other parts of military discipline. The women, by subscriptions among themselves, provided silk colors, which they presented to the companies, painted with different devices and mottoes, which I supplied.

The officers of the companies composing the Philadelphia regiment, being met, chose me for their colonel; but, conceiving myself unfit, I declined that station, and recommended Mr. Lawrence, a fine person, and man of influence, who was accordingly appointed. I then proposed a lottery to defray the expense of building a battery below the town, and furnishing it with cannon. It filled expeditiously, and the battery was soon erected, the

The Association Battery

merlons being framed of logs and filled with earth. We bought some old cannon from Boston, but these not being sufficient, we wrote to England for more, soliciting, at the same time, our proprietaries for some assistance, though without much expectation of obtaining it.

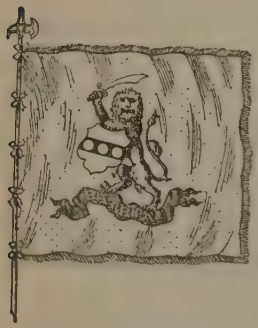
Meanwhile Colonel Lawrence, William Allen, Abram Taylor, Esqr., and myself were sent to New York by the associators, commissioned to borrow some cannon of Governor Clinton. He at first refused us peremptorily; but at dinner with his council, where there was great drinking of Madeira wine, as the custom of that place

then was, he softened by degrees, and said he would lend us six. After a few more bumpers he advanced to ten; and at length he very good-naturedly conceded eighteen. They were fine cannon, eighteen-pounders, with their carriages, which we soon transported and mounted on our battery, where the associators kept a nightly guard while the war lasted, and among the rest I regularly took my turn of duty there as a common soldier.

My activity in these operations was agreeable to the governor and council; they took me into confidence, and I was consulted by them in every measure wherein their concurrence was thought useful to the association. Calling in the aid of religion, I proposed to them the proclaiming a fast, to promote reformation, and implore the blessing of Heaven on our undertaking. They embraced the motion; but, as it was the first fast ever thought of in the province, the secretary had no precedent from which to draw the proclamation. My education in New England, where a fast is proclaimed every year, was here of some advantage: I drew it in the accustomed style; it was translated into German, printed in both languages, and divulged through the province. This gave the clergy of the different sects an opportunity of influencing their congregations to join in the association, and it would probably have been general among all but Quakers if the peace had not soon intervened.

It was thought by some of my friends that, by my activity in these affairs, I should offend that sect, and thereby lose my interest in the Assembly of the province, where they formed a great majority. A young gentleman, who had likewise some friends in the House,

and wished to secure me as their clerk, acquainted me that it was decided to displace me at the next election; and he, therefore, in good will, advised me to resign, as more consistent with my honor than being turned out. My answer to him was, that I had read or heard of some public man who made it a rule never to ask for an office, and never to refuse one when offered to him. "I approve," says I, "of his rule, and will practise it with a small addition: I shall never *ask*, never *refuse*, nor ever *resign* an office. If they will have my office of clerk to dispose of to another, they shall take it from me. I will not, by giving it up, lose my right of some time or other making reprisals on my adversaries." I heard, however, no more of this; I was chosen again unanimously as usual at the next election. Possibly, as they disliked my late intimacy with the members of council, who had joined the governors in all the disputes about military preparations, with which the House had long been harassed, they might have been pleased if I would voluntarily have left them; but they did not care to displace me on account merely of my zeal for the association, and they could not well give another reason.



FLAG OF THE PENNSYLVANIA ASSOCIATION
Designed by Franklin, 1747

Indeed, I had some cause to believe that the defence of the country was not disagreeable to any of them, provided they were not required to assist in it. And I found

that a much greater number of them than I could have imagined, though against offensive war, were clearly for the defensive. Many pamphlets *pro* and *con* were published on the subject, and some by good Quakers, in favor of defence, which I believe convinced most of their younger people.

A transaction in our fire company gave me some insight into their prevailing sentiments. It had been proposed that we should encourage the scheme for building a battery by laying out the present stock, then about sixty pounds, in tickets of the lottery.[1] By our rules, no money could be disposed of till the next meeting after the proposal. The company consisted of thirty members, of which twenty-two were Quakers, and eight only of other persuasions. We eight punctually attended the meeting; but though we thought that some of the Quakers would join us, we were by no means sure of a majority. Only one Quaker, Mr. James Morris, appeared to oppose the measure. He expressed much sorrow that it had ever been proposed, as he said *Friends* were all against it, and it would create such discord as might break up the company. We told him that we saw no reason for that; we were the minority, and if *Friends* were against the measure, and outvoted us, we must and should, agreeably to the usage of all societies, submit. When the hour for business arrived it was moved to put the vote; he allowed we might then do it by the rules, but, as he could assure us that a number of members intended to be present for the purpose of opposing it, it

[1] Lotteries were not at this time discountenanced as a species of gambling, but were a common means of promoting every sort of enterprise, religious as well as secular.

would be but candid to allow a little time for their appearing.

While we were disputing this, a waiter came to tell me two gentlemen below desired to speak with me. I went down, and found they were two of our Quaker members. They told me there were eight of them assembled at a tavern just by; that they were determined to come and vote with us if there should be occasion, which they hoped would not be the case, and desired we would not call for their assistance if we could do without it, as their voting for such a measure might embroil them with their elders and friends. Being thus secure of a majority, I went up, and after a little seeming hesitation, agreed to a delay of another hour. This Mr. Morris allowed to be extremely fair. Not one of his opposing friends appeared, at which he expressed great surprise; and at the expiration of the hour, we carried the resolution eight to one; and as, of the twenty-two Quakers, eight were ready to vote with us, and thirteen, by their absence, manifested that they were not inclined to oppose the measure, I afterwards estimated the proportion of Quakers sincerely against defence as one to twenty-one only; for these were all regular members of that society, and in good reputation among them, and had due notice of what was proposed at that meeting.

The honorable and learned Mr. Logan, who had always been of that sect, was one who wrote an address to them, declaring his approbation of defensive war, and supporting his opinion by many strong arguments. He put into my hands sixty pounds to be laid out in lottery tickets for the battery, with directions to apply what prizes might be drawn wholly to that service. He told me the follow-

ing anecdote of his old master, William Penn, respecting defence. He came over from England, when a young man, with that proprietary, and as his secretary. It was war time, and their ship was chased by an armed vessel, supposed to be an enemy. Their captain prepared for defence; but told William Penn, and his company of Quakers, that he did not expect their assistance, and they might retire into the cabin, which they did, except James Logan, who chose to stay upon deck, and was quartered to a gun. The supposed enemy proved a friend, so there was no fighting; but when the secretary went down to communicate the intelligence, William Penn rebuked him severely for staying upon deck, and undertaking to assist in defending the vessel, contrary to the principles of *Friends*, especially as it had not been required by the captain. This reproof, being before all the company, piqued the secretary, who answered, "*I being thy servant, why did thee not order me to come down? But thee was willing enough that I should stay and help to fight the ship when thee thought there was danger.*"

My being many years in the Assembly, the majority of which were constantly Quakers, gave me frequent opportunities of seeing the embarrassment given them by their principle against war, whenever application was made to them, by order of the crown, to grant aids for military purposes. They were unwilling to offend government, on the one hand, by a direct refusal; and their friends, the body of the Quakers, on the other, by a compliance contrary to their principles; hence a variety of evasions to avoid complying, and modes of disguising the compliance when it became unavoidable. The com-

mon mode at last was, to grant money under the phrase of its being "*for the king's use*," and never to inquire how it was applied.

But if the demand was not directly from the crown, that phrase was found not so proper, and some other was to be invented. As, when powder was wanting (I think it was for the garrison at Louisburg), and the government of New England solicited a grant of some from Pennsylvania, which was much urged on the House by Governor Thomas, they could not grant money to buy powder, because that was an ingredient of war; but they voted an aid to New England of three thousand pounds, to be put into the hands of the governor, and appropriated it for the purchasing of bread, flour, wheat, or *other grain*. Some of the council, desirous of giving the House still further embarrassment, advised the governor not to accept provision, as not being the thing he had demanded; but he replied, "I shall take the money, for I understand very well their meaning; other grain is gunpowder," which he accordingly bought, and they never objected to it.

It was in allusion to this fact that when, in our fire company, we feared the success of our proposal in favor of the lottery, and I had said to my friend Mr. Syng, one of our members, "If we fail, let us move the purchase of a fire-engine with the money; the Quakers can have no objection to that; and then, if you nominate me and I you as a committee for that purpose, we will buy a great gun, which is certainly a *fire-engine*." "I see," says he, "you have improved by being so long in the Assembly; your equivocal project would be just a match for their wheat or *other grain*."

These embarrassments that the Quakers suffered from having established and published it as one of their principles that no kind of war was lawful, and which, being once published, they could not afterwards, however they might change their minds, easily get rid of, reminds me of what I think a more prudent conduct in another sect among us, that of the Dunkers. I was acquainted with one of its founders, Michael Welfare, soon after it appeared. He complained to me that they were grievously calumniated by the zealots of other persuasions, and charged with abominable principles and practices, to which they were utter strangers. I told him this had always been the case with new sects, and that, to put a stop to such abuse, I imagined it might be well to publish the articles of their belief, and the rules of their discipline. He said that it had been proposed among them, but not agreed to, for this reason: "When we were first drawn together as a society," says he, "it has pleased God to enlighten our minds so far as to see that some doctrines, which we once esteemed truths, were errors; and that others, which we had esteemed errors, were real truths. From time to time He has been pleased to afford us farther light, and our principles have been improving, and our errors diminishing. Now we are not sure that we are arrived at the end of this progression, and at the perfection of spiritual or theological knowledge; and we fear that, if we should once print our confession of faith, we should feel ourselves as if bound and confined by it, and perhaps be unwilling to receive farther improvement, and our successors still more so, as conceiving what we their elders and founders had done, to be something sacred, never to be departed from."

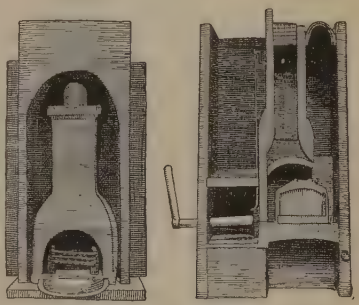
This modesty in a sect is perhaps a singular instance in the history of mankind, every other sect supposing itself in possession of all truth, and that those who differ are so far in the wrong; like a man travelling in foggy weather, those at some distance before him on the road he sees wrapped up in the fog, as well as those behind him, and also the people in the fields on each side, but near him all appears clear, though in truth he is as much in the fog as any of them. To avoid this kind of embarrassment, the Quakers have of late years been gradually declining the public service in the Assembly and in the magistracy, choosing rather to quit their power than their principle.

In order of time, I should have mentioned before, that having, in 1742, invented an open stove for the better warming of rooms,[1] and at the same time saving fuel, as the fresh air admitted was warmed in entering, I made a present of the model to Mr. Robert Grace, one of my early friends, who, having an iron furnace, found the casting of the plates for these stoves a profitable thing, as they were growing in demand. To promote that demand, I wrote and published a pamphlet, entitled "*An Account of the new-invented Pennsylvania Fireplaces; wherein their Construction and Manner of Operation is particularly explained; their Advantages above every other Method of warming Rooms demonstrated; and all Objections that have been raised against the Use of them answered and obviated*," etc. This pamphlet had a good effect. Governor Thomas was so pleased with the construction of this stove, as described in it, that he

[1] For diagram of working of this fireplace see page 193.

offered to give me a patent for the sole vending of them for a term of years; but I declined it from a principle which has ever weighed with me on such occasions, viz., *That, as we enjoy great advantages from the inventions of others, we should be glad of an opportunity to serve others by any invention of ours; and this we should do freely and generously.*

An ironmonger in London, however, assuming a good deal of my pamphlet, and working it up into his own, and making some small changes in the machine, which rather hurt its operation, got a patent for it there, and made, as I was told, a little fortune by it. And this is not the only instance of patents taken out for my inventions by others, though not always with the same success, which I never contested, as having no desire of profiting by patents myself, and hating disputes. The use of these fireplaces in very many houses, both of this and the neighboring colonies, has been, and is, a great saving of wood to the inhabitants.



FRANKLIN'S MODEL OF THE PENNSYLVANIA FIREPLACE

Now owned by the American Philosophical Society

Peace being concluded, and the association business therefore at an end, I turned my thoughts again to the affair of establishing an academy. The first step I took was to associate in the design a number of active friends,

of whom the Junto furnished a good part; the next was to write and publish a pamphlet, entitled *Proposals relating to the Education of Youth in Pennsylvania.* This I distributed among the principal inhabitants gratis; and as soon as I could suppose their minds a little prepared by the perusal of it, I set on foot a subscription for opening and supporting an academy; it was to be paid in quotas yearly for five years; by so dividing it, I judged the subscription might be larger, and I believe it was so, amounting to no less, if I remember right, than five thousand pounds.

In the introduction to these proposals, I stated their publication, not as an act of mine, but of some *public-spirited gentlemen*, avoiding as much as I could, according to my usual rule, the presenting myself to the public as the author of any scheme for their benefit.

The subscribers, to carry the project into immediate execution, chose out of their number twenty-four trustees, and appointed Mr. Francis, then attorney-general, and myself to draw up constitutions for the government of the academy; which being done and signed, a house was hired, masters engaged, and the schools opened, I think, in the same year, 1749.

The scholars increasing fast,[1] the house was soon found too small, and we were looking out for a piece of ground, properly situated, with intention to build, when Providence threw into our way a large house ready built, which, with a few alterations, might well serve our purpose. This was the building before mentioned, erected by the hearers of Mr. Whitefield, and was obtained for us in the following manner.

[1] In 1755, there were 300 students, many of them from other colonies.

It is to be noted that the contributions to this building being made by people of different sects, care was taken in the nomination of trustees, in whom the building and ground was to be vested, that a predominancy should not be given to any sect, lest in time that predominancy might be a means of appropriating the whole to the use of such sect, contrary to the original intention. It was therefore that one of each sect was appointed, viz., one Church-of-England man, one Presbyterian, one Baptist, one Moravian, etc., those, in case of vacancy by death, were to fill it by election from among the contributors. The Moravian happened not to please his colleagues, and on his death they resolved to have no other of that sect. The difficulty then was, how to avoid having two of some other sect, by means of the new choice.

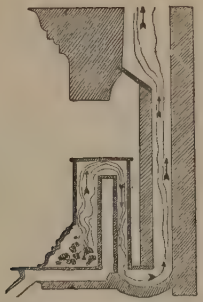
Several persons were named, and for that reason not agreed to. At length one mentioned me, with the observation that I was merely an honest man, and of no sect at all, which prevailed with them to choose me. The enthusiasm which existed when the house was built had long since abated, and its trustees had not been able to procure fresh contributions for paying the ground-rent, and discharging some other debts the building had occasioned, which embarrassed them greatly. Being now a member of both sets of trustees, that for the building and that for the academy, I had a good opportunity of negotiating with both, and brought them finally to an agreement, by which the trustees for the building were to cede it to those of the academy, the latter undertaking to discharge the debt, to keep forever open in the building a large hall for occasional preachers, according to the

original intention, and maintain a free school for the instruction of poor children.[1] Writings were accordingly drawn, and on paying the debts the trustees of the academy were put in possession of the premises; and by dividing the great and lofty hall into stories, and different rooms above and below for the several schools, and purchasing some additional ground, the whole was soon made fit for our purpose, and the scholars removed into the building. The care and trouble of agreeing with the workmen, purchasing materials, and superintending the work, fell upon me; and I went through it the more cheerfully, as it did not then interfere with my private business, having the year before taken a very able, industrious, and honest partner, Mr. David Hall, with whose character I was well acquainted, as he had worked for me four years. He took off my hands all care of the printing office, paying me punctually my share of the profits. This partnership continued eighteen years, successfully for us both.

The trustees of the academy, after a while, were incorporated by a charter from the governor; their funds were increased by contributions in Britain and grants of land from the proprietaries, to which the Assembly has since made considerable addition; and thus was established the present University of Philadelphia. I have been continued one of its trustees from the beginning, now near forty years, and have had the very great pleasure of seeing a number of the youth who have received

[1] The hall was kept open and the charity school maintained according to this agreement until 1877. In that year, the Trustees of Pennsylvania University voted to discontinue the school, rent the building, and apply the income as free tuition in such ways as would meet the obligation.

their education in it, distinguished by their improved abilities, serviceable in public stations, and ornaments to their country.



PROFILE SECTION OF FRANKLIN'S PENNSYLVANIA FIREPLACE

IX. Retirement from Business, Burgess, Postmaster-General

1748–1754

Comment. When Franklin retired from business he was but forty-two years of age, but he had acquired a comfortable competence. By the terms of his agreement with Hall, the business was to go on under the firm name, "Franklin and Hall," and he was to receive, each year, for eighteen years, £1000. He owned a farm in New Jersey and houses in Philadelphia. Beside these sources of income, he had established young men in the printing business in various colonies and in the West Indies, from whom he received a per cent of income. When he became postmaster he at first expended private money to bring about the reforms he wished, but in the end he received from this office a considerable income. He also received an indirect advantage from the office, for he did not hesitate to employ relatives in need of support in the subordinate positions under his control. He at once appointed his son William to be controller of the Philadelphia office, and he kept some one of his own family in this important position until his own dismissal in 1774. To his brother John, he gave the Boston Post-Office, and he found profitable employment for relatives and friends in many minor positions. It does not appear, however, that he allowed the post-office to suffer by this nepotism; in one instance, at least, he refused to cause a vacancy for a nephew, by dismissing a good man before he wished to go. It cannot be denied, however, that Franklin left an example of the use of public office for private gain not in accord with the highest ideals of public service.

When Franklin entered on the management of the Post-Office

in the Colonies, mails were irregular, and many abuses had crept in. He reorganized the service, increased the frequency of mails, regulated the carrying of papers, and brought the whole system to a state of efficiency heretofore unknown in America. At the end of eight years, he sent to the general office in England a remittance of £494 4*s.* 8*d.*, profits above all expenses; the record of it in the department contains these words: "and this is the first remittance ever made of the kind."

In the management of other public business, Franklin met with the same success. This was due in great part to the exact information he at once obtained about the undertaking and to the care with which he arranged a plan of administration which provided for the orderly and systematic performance of all details. The ability of Franklin to hold every part of a subject in consideration, and to devise practical schemes which he was able to present in writing with great force and clearness, soon made him a leader in other affairs than business. He was appointed as commissioner to negotiate treaties, and the paper drawn by him, in 1754, to present a plan for the union of the colonies for defense quickly became famous. Although it was rejected by both parties, without doubt it exercised great influence in turning the thoughts of the colonists toward union.

D.

Franklin's Outline. Put in the commission of the peace. Logan fond of me. His library. Appointed Postmaster-General.[1] Chosen Assemblyman. Commissioner to treat with Indians at Carlisle and at Easton. Project and establish Academy. Pamphlet on it. Journey to Boston. At Albany, Plan of union of the colonies. Copy of it. Remarks upon it. It fails, and how. Journey to Boston in 1754. Disputes about it in our Assembly. My part in them. New Governor. Disputes with him. His character and sayings to me. Chosen Alderman. Project of Hospital. My share in it. Its success. Boxes. Made a Commissioner of the Treasury.

[1] In writing this part of the Autobiography, Franklin frequently deviated from the outline he had made long before.

When I disengaged myself, as above mentioned, from private business, I flattered myself that, by the sufficient though moderate fortune I had acquired, I had secured leisure during the rest of my life for philosophical studies and amusements. I purchased all Dr. Spence's apparatus, who had come from England to lecture here, and I proceeded in my electrical experiments[1] with great alacrity; but the public, now considering me as a man of leisure, laid hold of me for their purposes, every part of our civil government, and almost at the same time, imposing some duty upon me. The governor put me into the commission of the peace; the corporation of the city chose me of the common council, and soon after an alderman; and the citizens at large chose me a burgess to represent them in Assembly. This latter station was the more agreeable to me, as I was at length tired with sitting there to hear debates, in which, as clerk, I could take no part, and which were often so unentertaining that I was induced to amuse myself with making magic squares or circles, or anything to avoid weariness; and I conceived my becoming a member would enlarge my power of doing good. I would not, however, insinuate that my ambition was not flattered by all these promotions; it certainly was; for, considering my low beginning, they were great things to me; and they were still more pleasing, as being so many spontaneous testimonies of the public good opinion, and by me entirely unsolicited.

The office of justice of the peace I tried a little, by attending a few courts, and sitting on the bench to hear causes; but finding that more knowledge of the common

[1] For an account of Franklin's electrical experiments at this time see page 250.

law than I possessed was necessary to act in that station with credit, I gradually withdrew from it, excusing myself by my being obliged to attend the higher duties of a legislator in the Assembly. My election to this trust was repeated every year for ten years, without my ever asking any elector for his vote, or signifying, either directly or indirectly, any desire of being chosen. On taking my seat in the House, my son was appointed their clerk.

The year following, a treaty being to be held with the Indians at Carlisle, the governor sent a message to the House, proposing that they should nominate some of their members, to be joined with some members of council, as commissioners for that purpose. The House named the speaker (Mr. Norris) and myself; and, being commissioned, we went to Carlisle, and met the Indians accordingly.

As those people are extremely apt to get drunk, and, when so, are very quarrelsome and disorderly, we strictly forbade the selling any liquor to them; and when they complained of this restriction, we told them that if they would continue sober during the treaty, we would give them plenty of rum when business was over. They promised this, and they kept their promise because they could get no liquor, and the treaty was conducted very orderly, and concluded to mutual satisfaction. They then claimed and received the rum; this was in the afternoon: they were near one hundred men, women, and children, and were lodged in temporary cabins, built in the form of a square, just without the town. In the evening, hearing a great noise among them, the commissioners walked out to see what was the matter. We found they had made a

great bonfire in the middle of the square; they were all drunk, men and women, quarrelling and fighting. Their dark-colored bodies, half naked, seen only by the gloomy light of the bonfire, running after and beating one another with firebrands, accompanied by their horrid yellings, formed a scene the most resembling our ideas of hell that could well be imagined; there was no appeasing the tumult, and we retired to our lodging. At midnight a number of them came thundering at our door, demanding more rum, of which we took no notice.

The next day, sensible they had misbehaved in giving us that disturbance, they sent three of their old counsellors to make their apology. The orator acknowledged the fault but laid it on the rum; and then endeavored to excuse the rum by saying, "*The Great Spirit, who made all things, made everything for some use, and whatever use he designed anything for, that use it should always be put to. Now, when he made rum, he said, 'Let this be for the Indians to get drunk with,' and it must be so.*" And, indeed, if it be the design of Providence to extirpate these savages in order to make room for cultivators of the earth, it seems not improbable that rum may be the appointed means. It has already annihilated all the tribes who formerly inhabited the sea-coast.

In 1751, Dr. Thomas Bond, a particular friend of mine, conceived the idea of establishing a hospital in Philadelphia (a very beneficent design, which has been ascribed to me, but was originally his) for the reception and cure of poor sick persons, whether inhabitants of the province or strangers. He was zealous and active in endeavoring to procure subscriptions for it, but the proposal being a

novelty in America, and at first not well understood, he met but with small success.

At length he came to me with the compliment that he found there was no such thing as carrying a public-spirited project through without my being concerned in it. "For," says he, "I am often asked by those to whom I propose subscribing, Have you consulted Franklin upon this business? And what does he think of it? And when I tell them that I have not (supposing it rather out of your line), they do not subscribe, but say they will consider of it." I inquired into the nature and probable utility of his scheme, and receiving from him a very satisfactory explanation, I not only subscribed to it myself, but engaged heartily in the design of procuring subscriptions from others. Previously, however, to the solicitation I endeavored to prepare the minds of the people by writing on the subject in the newspapers, which was my usual custom in such cases, but which he had omitted.

The subscriptions afterwards were more free and generous; but, beginning to flag, I saw they would be insufficient without some assistance from the Assembly, and therefore proposed to petition for it, which was done. The country members did not at first relish the project; they objected that it could only be serviceable to the city, and therefore the citizens alone should be at the expense of it; and they doubted whether the citizens themselves generally approved of it. My allegation on the contrary, that it met with such approbation as to leave no doubt of our being able to raise two thousand pounds by voluntary donations, they considered as a most extravagant supposition, and utterly impossible.

On this I formed my plan; and, asking leave to bring in a bill for incorporating the contributors according to the prayer of their petition, and granting them a blank sum of money, which leave was obtained chiefly on the consideration that the House could throw the bill out if they did not like it, I drew it so as to make the important clause a conditional one, viz., "And be it enacted, by the authority aforesaid, that when the said contributors shall have met and chosen their managers and treasurer, *and shall have raised by their contributions a capital stock of* ——— *value* (the yearly interest of which is to be applied to the accommodating of the sick poor in the said hospital, free of charge for diet, attendance, advice, and medicines), *and shall make the same appear to the satisfaction of the speaker of the Assembly for the time being*, that *then* it shall and may be lawful for the said speaker, and he is hereby required, to sign an order on the provincial treasurer for the payment of two thousand pounds, in two yearly payments, to the treasurer of the said hospital, to be applied to the founding, building, and finishing of the same."

This condition carried the bill through; for the members who had opposed the grant, and now conceived they might have the credit of being charitable without the expense, agreed to its passage; and then, in soliciting subscriptions among the people, we urged the conditional promise of the law as an additional motive to give, since every man's donation would be doubled; thus the clause worked both ways. The subscriptions accordingly soon exceeded the requisite sum, and we claimed and received the public gift, which enabled us to carry the design

into execution. A convenient and handsome building was soon erected; the institution has by constant experience been found useful, and flourishes to this day; and I do not remember any of my political manœuvres, the success of which gave me at the time more pleasure, or wherein, after thinking of it, I more easily excused myself for having made some use of cunning.

It was about this time that another projector, the Rev. Gilbert Tennent, came to me with a request that I would assist him in procuring a subscription for erecting a new meeting-house. It was to be for the use of a congregation he had gathered among the Presbyterians, who were originally disciples of Mr. Whitefield. Unwilling to make myself disagreeable to my fellow-citizens by too frequently soliciting their contributions, I absolutely refused. He then desired I would furnish him with a list of the names of persons I knew by experience to be generous and public-spirited. I thought it would be unbecoming in me, after their kind compliance with my solicitations, to mark them out to be worried by other beggars, and therefore refused also to give such a list. He then desired I would at least give him my advice. "That I will readily do," said I; "and, in the first place, I advise you to apply to all those whom you know will give something; next, to those whom you are uncertain whether they will give anything or not, and show them the list of those who have given; and, lastly, do not neglect those who you are sure will give nothing, for in some of them you may be mistaken." He laughed and thanked me, and said he would take my advice. He did so, for he asked of *everybody*, and he obtained a much

larger sum than he expected, with which he erected the capacious and very elegant meeting-house that stands in Arch Street.[1]

Our city, though laid out with a beautiful regularity, the streets large, straight, and crossing each other at right angles, had the disgrace of suffering those streets to remain long unpaved, and in wet weather the wheels of heavy carriages ploughed them into a quagmire, so that it was difficult to cross them; and in dry weather the dust was offensive. I had lived near what was called the Jersey Market, and saw with pain the inhabitants wading in mud while purchasing their provisions. A strip of ground down the middle of that market was at length paved with brick, so that, being once in the market, they had firm footing, but were often over shoes in dirt to get there. By talking and writing on the subject, I was at length instrumental in getting the street paved with stone between the market and the bricked foot pavement, that was on each side next the houses. This, for some time, gave an easy access to the market dry shod; but the rest of the street not being paved, whenever a carriage came out of the mud upon this pavement, it shook off and left its dirt upon it, and it was soon covered with mire, which was not removed, the city as yet having no scavengers.

After some inquiry, I found a poor, industrious man, who was willing to undertake keeping the pavement clean, by sweeping it twice a week, carrying off the dirt from before all the neighbors' doors, for the sum of six-

[1] This church, in its turn, was given up in 1837 for another and more commodious building on a new site.

pence per month, to be paid by each house. I then wrote and printed a paper setting forth the advantages to the neighborhood that might be obtained by this small expense; the greater ease in keeping our houses clean, so much dirt not being brought in by people's feet; the benefit to the shops by more custom, etc., etc., as buyers could more easily get at them; and by not having, in windy weather, the dust blown in upon their goods, etc., etc. I sent one of these papers to each house, and in a day or two went round to see who would subscribe an agreement to pay these sixpences; it was unanimously signed, and for a time well executed. All the inhabitants of the city were delighted with the cleanliness of the pavement that surrounded the market, it being a convenience to all, and this raised a general desire to have all the streets paved, and made the people more willing to submit to a tax for that purpose.

After some time I drew a bill for paving the city, and brought it into the Assembly. It was just before I went to England in 1757, and did not pass till I was gone, and then with an alteration in the mode of assessment, which I thought not for the better, but with an additional provision for lighting as well as paving the streets, which was a great improvement. It was by a private person, the late Mr. John Clifton, his giving a sample of the utility of lamps, by placing one at his door, that the people were first impressed with the idea of enlighting all the city. The honor of this public benefit has also been ascribed to me, but it belongs truly to that gentleman. I did but follow his example, and have only some merit to claim respecting the form of our lamps,

as differing from the globe lamps we were at first supplied with from London. Those we found inconvenient in these respects: they admitted no air below; the smoke, therefore, did not readily go out above, but circulated in the globe, lodged on its inside, and soon obstructed the light they were intended to afford; giving, besides, the daily trouble of wiping them clean; and an accidental stroke on one of them would demolish it and render it totally useless. I therefore suggested the composing them of four flat panes, with a long funnel above to draw up the smoke, and crevices admitting air below, to facilitate the ascent of the smoke; by this means they were kept clean, and did not grow dark in a few hours, as the London lamps do, but continued light till morning, and an accidental stroke would generally break but a single pane, easily repaired.

I have sometimes wondered that the Londoners did not, from the effect holes in the bottom of the globe lamps used at Vauxhall have in keeping them clean, learn to have such holes in their street lamps. But, these holes being made for another purpose, viz., to communicate flame more suddenly to the wick by a little flax hanging down through them, the other use, of letting in air, seems not to have been thought of; and therefore, after the lamps have been lit a few hours, the streets of London are very poorly illuminated.

The mention of these improvements puts me in mind of one I proposed, when in London, to Dr. Fothergill, who was among the best men I have known, and a great promoter of useful projects. I had observed that the streets, when dry, were never swept, and the light dust

carried away; but it was suffered to accumulate till wet weather reduced it to mud, and then, after lying some days so deep on the pavement that there was no crossing but in paths kept clean by poor people with brooms, it was with great labor raked together and thrown up into carts open above, the sides of which suffered some of the slush at every jolt on the pavement to shake out and fall, sometimes to the annoyance of foot-passengers. The reason given for not sweeping the dusty streets was, that the dust would fly into the windows of shops and houses.

An accidental occurrence had instructed me how much sweeping might be done in a little time. I found at my door in Craven Street, one morning, a poor woman sweeping my pavement with a birch broom; she appeared very pale and feeble, as just come out of a fit of sickness. I asked who employed her to sweep there; she said, "Nobody; but I am very poor and in distress, and I sweeps before gentlefolkses doors, and hopes they will give me something." I bid her sweep the whole street clean, and I would give her a shilling; this was at nine o'clock; at twelve she came for the shilling. From the slowness I saw at first in her working I could scarce believe that the work was done so soon, and sent my servant to examine it, who reported that the whole street was swept perfectly clean, and all the dust placed in the gutter, which was in the middle; and the next rain washed it quite away, so that the pavement and even the kennel were perfectly clean.

I then judged that, if that feeble woman could sweep such a street in three hours, a strong, active man might have done it in half the time. And here let me remark

the convenience of having but one gutter in such a narrow street, running down its middle, instead of two, one on each side, near the footway; for where all the rain that falls on a street runs from the sides and meets in the middle, it forms there a current strong enough to wash away all the mud it meets with; but when divided into two channels, it is often too weak to cleanse either, and only makes the mud it finds more fluid, so that the wheels of carriages and feet of horses throw and dash it upon the foot-pavement, which is thereby rendered foul and slippery, and sometimes splash it upon those who are walking. My proposal, communicated to the good doctor, was as follows:

"For the more effectual cleaning and keeping clean the streets of London and Westminster, it is proposed that the several watchmen be contracted with to have the dust swept up in dry seasons, and the mud raked up at other times, each in the several streets and lanes of his round; that they be furnished with brooms and other proper instruments for these purposes, to be kept at their respective stands, ready to furnish the poor people they may employ in the service.

"That in the dry summer months the dust be all swept up into heaps at proper distances, before the shops and windows of houses are usually opened, when the scavengers, with close-covered carts, shall carry it all away.

"That the mud, when raked up, be not left in heaps to be spread abroad again by the wheels of carriages and trampling of horses, but that the scavengers be provided with bodies of carts, not placed high upon wheels, but low upon sliders with lattice bottoms, which, being

covered with straw, will retain the mud thrown into them, and permit the water to drain from it, whereby it will become much lighter, water making the greatest part of its weight; these bodies of carts to be placed at convenient distances, and the mud brought to them in wheelbarrows; they remaining where placed till the mud is drained, and then horses brought to draw them away."

I have since had doubts of the practicability of the latter part of this proposal, on account of the narrowness of some streets, and the difficulty of placing the draining-sleds so as not to encumber too much the passage; but I am still of opinion that the former, requiring the dust to be swept up and carried away before the shops are open, is very practicable in the summer, when the days are long; for, in walking through the Strand and Fleet Street one morning at seven o'clock, I observed there was not one shop open, though it had been daylight and the sun up above three hours; the inhabitants of London choosing voluntarily to live much by candle-light,[1] and sleep by sunshine, and yet often complain, a little absurdly, of the duty on candles, and the high price of tallow.

Some may think these trifling matters not worth minding or relating; but when they consider that though dust blown into the eyes of a single person, or into a single shop on a windy day, is but of small importance, yet the great number of the instances in a populous city,

[1] In *An Economical Project*, published in Paris about 1784, Franklin announced that he had made a great discovery, namely, that the sun gave light as soon as it rose in the morning. He then showed by a mathematical calculation how much the inhabitants of the city of Paris might save in one year, between March 20 and September 20, by using the hours of daylight in the morning in place of the dark hours for which they bought wax candles. The paper is printed in S.-IX. 183.

and its frequent repetitions give it weight and consequence, perhaps they will not censure very severely those who bestow some attention to affairs of this seemingly low nature. Human felicity is produced not so much by great pieces of good fortune that seldom happen, as by little advantages that occur every day. Thus, if you teach a poor young man to shave himself, and keep his razor in order, you may contribute more to the happiness of his life than in giving him a thousand guineas. The money may be soon spent, the regret only remaining of having foolishly consumed it; but in the other case, he escapes the frequent vexation of waiting for barbers, and of their sometimes dirty fingers, offensive breaths, and dull razors; he shaves when most convenient to him, and enjoys daily the pleasure of its being done with a good instrument. With these sentiments I have hazarded the few preceding pages, hoping they may afford hints which some time or other may be useful to a city I love, having lived many years in it very happily, and perhaps to some of our towns in America.

Having been for some time employed by the postmaster-general of America as his comptroller in regulating several offices, and bringing the officers to account, I was, upon his death in 1753, appointed, jointly with Mr. William Hunter, to succeed him, by a commission from the postmaster-general in England. The American office never had hitherto paid anything to that of Britain. We were to have six hundred pounds a year between us, if we could make that sum out of the profits of the office. To do this a variety of improvements were necessary; some of these were inevitably at first expensive, so that

NEW ENGLAND,
NEW YORK,
NEW JERSEY and
PENSILVANIA.
P. of North AMERICA
PART OF
NEW FRANCE
NOVA SCOTIA
SCOTLAND
NEW ENGLAND
NEW YORK
NEW JERSEY
PENSILVANIA
PART of MARYLAND
Champlain Lake
Albanie
Boston Town & Harbour
C. Codd
Nantucher Shoales
St. George's Bank
Teffery's Bank
Annapolis Royal
C. Sable
Sable I.
Mount Desert
Mount Desert Rock
Penobscot
Pemaquid
C. Ann
Plymouth
Connecticut R.
Hudsons R.
Delaware R.
Susquehanna R.
Patowmack R.
Rappahannock R.
Potomack R.
Chesapeak Bay
Delaware Bay
Delaware
Philadelphia
Burlington
Mount Holly
Trenton
Amboy
Sandy Hook
Sandy Land
Egg Harbour
Great Egg Harbour
Barnegat
Barnegat Bay
Manasquam R.
Squan
Monmouth
Shrewsbury
Shark R.
Raritan R.
Staten Island
Long Island
Hempstead
Southampton
Easthampton
Montauk Pt.
Fisher's Island
Block Island
Rhode Island
Newport
Bristol
Swansey
Taunton
Dighton
Rehoboth
Seekonk
Providence
Providence Town
Mount Hope
Martha's Vineyard
Nantucket
Cape Cod
Barnstable
Sandwich
Plymouth
Duxbury
Marshfield
Scituate
Hingham
Weymouth
Dorchester
Milton
Roxbury
Brookline
Cambridge
Charlestown
Boston
Chelsea
Lynn
Salem
Marblehead
Beverly
Manchester
Ipswich
Hampton
Portsmouth
Kittery
Piscataqua R.
Saco R.
Casco Bay
Falmouth
Scarborough
Black Point
Kennebeck R.
Merry Meeting Bay
Arrowsick I.
Sheepscot R.
Pemaquid
Monhegan I.
Penobscot
Penobscot Bay
Mount Desert
Mount Desert Rock
Fort Nassau
Fort Orange
Albanie
Schenectady
Connecticut R.
Hudsons R.
Mohawks R.
Wood Creek
Oneida Lake
Onondaga Lake
Cayuga Lake
Seneca Lake
Canada Creek
Fort Stanwix
Fort Schuyler
Fort Herkimer
Fort Hunter
Fort Johnson
Fort Edward
Fort Miller
Fort Saratoga
Fort Ann
Fort George
Fort William Henry
Fort Frederick
Fort Dummer
Fort Massachusetts
Fort Dauphin
Fort Frontenac
Fort Niagara
Fort Schlosser
Fort Erie
Fort Detroit
Fort Sandusky
Fort Miamis
Fort Ouiatanon
Fort Chartres
Fort Pontchartrain
Fort Michilimakinac
Fort St. Joseph
Fort Presque Isle
Fort Du Quesne
Fort Cumberland
Fort Loudoun
Fort Augusta
Fort Allen
Fort Halifax
Fort Richmond
Fort Western
Fort Shirley
Fort Pownall
Fort Frederick
Fort Gage
Fort Chiswell
Fort Granville
Fort Prince George
Fort Moore
Fort Toulouse
Fort Tombecbe
Fort Conde
Fort Mobile
Fort Rosalie
Fort Natchez
Fort Bute
Fort Panmure
Fort Adams
Fort Charlotte
Fort Dauphin
Fort Orleans
Fort Chambly
Fort St. John
Fort Frederick
Fort Gaspee
Fort Cumberland
Fort Lawrence
Fort Edward
Fort Sackville
Fort Vincennes
Fort Massac
Fort Ascension
Fort Bourbon
Fort Prudhomme
Fort Natchitoches
Fort Rapides
Fort Arkansas
Fort Carlos
Fort Iberville
Fort Maurepas
Fort Toulouse
Fort Tombecbe
Fort Conde
Fort Mobile
Fort Rosalie
Fort Natchez
Fort Bute
Fort Panmure
Fort Adams
Fort Charlotte
Fort Dauphin
Fort Orleans
Fort Chambly
Fort St. John
Fort Frederick
Fort Gaspee
Fort Cumberland
Fort Lawrence
Fort Edward
Fort Sackville
Fort Vincennes
Fort Massac
Fort Ascension
Fort Bourbon
Fort Prudhomme
Fort Natchitoches
Fort Rapides
Fort Arkansas
Fort Carlos
Fort Iberville
Fort Maurepas
English Miles
P. of the IROQUOIS
Cayugas
Onondagas
Oneidas
Mohawks
The Present Susquehanna Indian Fort
The Greatest Fall
Philadelphia
Buckingham Co.
Bucks Co.
Essex
Middlesex
Monmouth Co.
Burlington
Gloucester
Salem
Cumberland
Cape May
Newcastle Co.
Kent Co.
Sussex Co.
Baltimore Co.
Baltimore
Annapolis
Queen Anne's Co.
Kent Co.
Talbot Co.
Dorchester Co.
Somerset Co.
Worcester Co.
Accomack Co.
Northampton Co.
Chesapeak Bay
Delaware Bay
Delaware
Virginia
Maryland
Pensilvania
New Jersey
New York
New England
Canada
Nova Scotia
Atlantic Ocean
WESTERN OCEAN
An Account of the Post of the Continent of North America as they are Regulated by the Postmasters Gen.l of the Post House
The Western Post setts out from Philadelphia every Fryday leaving Letters at Burlington and Fort Amboy and arrives at New York on Sunday night; the distance between Philadelphia and New York being 136 Miles. The Post goes out Eastward every Monday morning from New York, and arrives at Seabrook Thursday noon; being 150 Miles where the Post from Boston setts out at the same time with the New York Post returning with the Eastern Letters, and the Boston Post with the Western. Bags are dropt at New London, Stonnington, Rhode Island, and Bristol. The Post from Boston to Falmouth being 90 Miles leaves Letters at Ipswich, Salem, Marblehead and Newberry. There are offices kept at Burlington, Perth Amboy in New Jersey, New London and Stonnington in Connecticut, at Rhode Island, Bristol, Ipswich, Salem, Marblehead and Newberry, and the 3 Great Offices are at Boston, New York & Philadelphia.

in the first four years the office became above nine hundred pounds in debt to us. But it soon after began to repay us; and before I was displaced by a freak of the ministers, of which I shall speak hereafter, we had brought it to yield *three times* as much clear revenue to the crown as the post-office of Ireland. Since that imprudent transaction, they have received from it — not one farthing!

The business of the post-office occasioned my taking a journey this year to New England, where the College of Cambridge, of their own motion, presented me with the degree of Master of Arts.[1] Yale College, in Connecticut, had before made me a similar compliment. Thus, without studying in any college, I came to partake of their honors. They were conferred in consideration of my improvements and discoveries in the electric branch of natural philosophy.

In 1754, war with France being again apprehended, a congress of commissioners from the different colonies was, by an order of the Lords of Trade, to be assembled at Albany, there to confer with the chiefs of the Six Nations concerning the means of defending both their country and ours. Governor Hamilton, having received this order, acquainted the House with it, requesting they would furnish proper presents for the Indians, to be given on this occasion; and naming the speaker (Mr. Norris) and myself to join Mr. Thomas Penn and Mr. Secretary Peters as commissioners to act for Pennsyl-

[1] In the Diary of President Stiles of Yale College, he says that the degree of A. M. was given Franklin by Yale College at commencement in September following his visit in Cambridge. He adds that Franklin's discoveries in electrical science were recognized and adopted at Yale College before anywhere else in the world.

vania. The House approved the nomination, and provided the goods for the present, though they did not much like treating out of the provinces; and we met the other commissioners at Albany about the middle of June.

In our way thither, I projected and drew a plan for the union of all the colonies under one government, so far as might be necessary for defence and other important general purposes. As we passed through New York, I had there shown my project to Mr. James Alexander and Mr. Kennedy, two gentlemen of great knowledge in public affairs, and, being fortified by their approbation, I ventured to lay it before the Congress. It then appeared that several of the commissioners had formed plans of the same kind. A previous question was first taken, whether a union should be established, which passed in the affirmative unanimously. A committee was then appointed, one member from each colony, to consider the several plans, and report. Mine happened to be preferred, and, with a few amendments, was accordingly reported.

By this plan the general government was to be administered by a president-general, appointed and supported by the crown, and a grand council was to be chosen by the representatives of the people of the several colonies, met in their respective assemblies. The debates upon it in Congress went on daily, hand in hand with the Indian business. Many objections and difficulties were started, but at length they were all overcome, and the plan was unanimously agreed to, and copies ordered to be transmitted to the Board of Trade and to the assemblies of the several provinces. Its fate was singular: the assemblies did not adopt it, as they all thought there was too

much *prerogative* in it, and in England it was judged to have too much of the *democratic*. The Board of Trade therefore did not approve of it, nor recommend it for the approbation of his majesty; but another scheme was formed, supposed to answer the same purpose better, whereby the governors of the provinces, with some members of their respective councils, were to meet and order the raising of troops, building of forts, etc., and to draw on the treasury of Great Britain for the expense, which was afterwards to be refunded by an act of Parliament laying a tax on America. My plan, with my reasons in support of it, is to be found among my political papers that are printed.

DEVICE PRINTED IN FRANKLIN'S "PENNSYLVANIA GAZETTE," 1754

Being the winter following in Boston, I had much conversation with Governor Shirley upon both the plans. Part of what passed between us on the occasion may also be seen among those papers.[1] The different and contrary reasons of dislike to my plan makes me suspect that it was really the true medium; and I am still of opinion it would have been happy for both sides the water if it had been adopted. The colonies, so united, would have been sufficiently strong to have defended themselves; there would then have been no need of troops from England; of course, the subsequent pretence for taxing America, and the bloody contest it occasioned, would have been avoided. But such

[1] See Letters to Governor Shirley. — S.–III. 232–7.

mistakes are not new: history is full of the errors of states and princes.

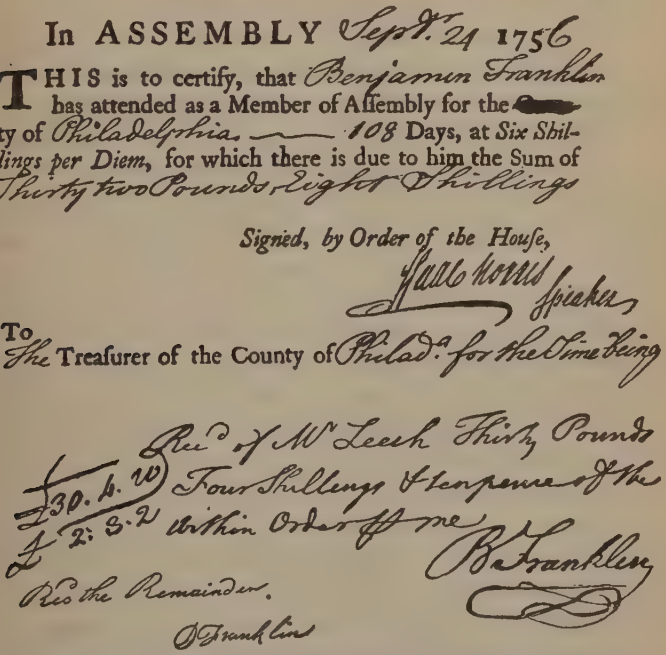
> "Look round the habitable world, how few
> Know their own good, or, knowing it, pursue!"

Those who govern, having much business on their hands, do not generally like to take the trouble of considering and carrying into execution new projects. The best public measures are therefore seldom *adopted from previous wisdom, but forced by the occasion.*

The Governor of Pennsylvania, in sending it down to the Assembly, expressed his approbation of the plan, "as appearing to him to be drawn up with great clearness and strength of judgment, and therefore recommended it as well worthy of their closest and most serious attention." The House, however, by the management of a certain member, took it up when I happened to be absent, which I thought not very fair, and reprobated it without paying any attention to it at all, to my no small mortification.

In my journey to Boston this year, I met at New York with our new governor, Mr. Morris, just arrived there from England, with whom I had been before intimately acquainted. He brought a commission to supersede Mr. Hamilton, who, tired with the disputes his proprietary instructions subjected him to, had resigned. Mr. Morris asked me if I thought he must expect as uncomfortable an administration. I said, "No; you may, on the contrary, have a very comfortable one, if you will only take care not to enter into any dispute with the Assembly." "My dear friend," says he, pleasantly, "how can you advise my avoiding disputes? You know I love

disputing; it is one of my greatest pleasures; however, to show the regard I have for your counsel, I promise you I will, if possible, avoid them." He had some reason



In ASSEMBLY Sept. 24 1756

THIS is to certify, that Benjamin Franklin has attended as a Member of Assembly for the City of Philadelphia 108 Days, at *Six Shillings per Diem*, for which there is due to him the Sum of Thirty two Pounds, Eight Shillings

Signed, by Order of the House,

Isaac Norris Speaker

To The Treasurer of the County of Philad.a for the Time being

Rec.d of Mr Leech Thirty Pounds Four Shillings & ten pence of the within Order ff me

B. Franklin

£30. 4. 10
£2. 3. 2

Rec.d the Remainder.

B Franklin

FAC-SIMILE OF FRANKLIN'S CERTIFICATE AS A MEMBER OF ASSEMBLY

for loving to dispute, being eloquent, an acute sophister, and therefore generally successful in argumentative conversation. He had been brought up to it from a boy, his father, as I have heard, accustoming his children to dispute with one another for his diversion, while sitting at table after dinner; but I think the practice was not wise;

for, in the course of my observation, these disputing, contradicting, and confuting people are generally unfortunate in their affairs. They get victory sometimes, but they never get good will, which would be of more use to them. We parted, he going to Philadelphia, and I to Boston.

In returning, I met at New York with the votes of the Assembly, by which it appeared that, notwithstanding his promise to me, he and the House were already in high contention; and it was a continual battle between them as long as he retained the government. I had my share of it; for, as soon as I got back to my seat in the Assembly, I was put on every committee for answering his speeches and messages, and by the committees always desired to make the drafts. Our answers, as well as his messages, were often tart, and sometimes indecently abusive; and as he knew I wrote for the Assembly, one might have imagined that, when we met, we could hardly avoid cutting throats; but he was so good-natured a man that no personal difference between him and me was occasioned by the contest, and we often dined together.

One afternoon, in the height of this public quarrel, we met in the street. "Franklin," says he, "you must go home with me and spend the evening; I am to have some company that you will like;" and taking me by the arm, he led me to his house. In gay conversation over our wine, after supper, he told us, jokingly, that he much admired the idea of Sancho Panza, who, when it was proposed to give him a government, requested it might be a government of *blacks*, as then, if he could not agree with his people, he might sell them. One of his friends, who sat next to me, says, "Franklin, why do you continue to

side with these damned Quakers? Had you not better sell them? The proprietor would give a good price." "The governor," says I, "has not yet *blacked* them enough." He, indeed, had labored hard to blacken the Assembly in all his messages, but they wiped off his coloring as fast as he laid it on, and placed it, in return, thick upon his own face; so that, finding he was likely to be negrofied himself, he, as well as Mr. Hamilton, grew tired of the contest, and quitted the government.

These public quarrels were all at bottom owing to the proprietaries, our hereditary governors, who, when any expense was to be incurred for the defence of their province, with incredible meanness instructed their deputies to pass no act for levying the necessary taxes, unless their vast estates were in the same act expressly excused; and they had even taken bonds of these deputies to observe such instructions. The Assemblies for three years held out against this injustice, though constrained to bend at last. At length Captain Denny, who was Governor Morris's successor, ventured to disobey [1] those instructions: how that was brought about I shall show hereafter.

But I am got forward too fast with my story: there are still some transactions to be mentioned that happened during the administration of Governor Morris.

[1] See note on Governor Denny, page 381.

X. "The Dutche Advertisement" and the Frontier Forts

1754–1756

Comment. Franklin's account of Braddock's ill-fated expedition is pretty nearly confined to his own part in furnishing horses and wagons and in forwarding supplies. Historically, it is supplementary to the more familiar story of the military expedition. Braddock took his route through Virginia and Maryland along the course of the Potomac River to Fort Cumberland, the place of rendevouz — a route that had been urged by Governor Dinwiddie of Virginia and by members of the newly formed Ohio Company who wished thus to develop the Virginia route to the Ohio Valley. Few roads had been made in this territory, and such as existed became impassable in rainy seasons; the colonists, living on large plantations, used water routes entirely in trading and traveling. Braddock's troops could follow the course of the river only to Fort Cumberland, and beyond that point no roads led through the difficult and hilly country in the direction they must go. The folly of taking this route might have been apparent to the general. In Pennsylvania, on the contrary, roads led out from Philadelphia in every direction, connecting settlement with settlement. The Dutch farmers had brought with them wagons, a knowledge of road-making, and saw-mills; hence the settlers, pushing westward, built roads and bridged streams wherever they went. Braddock might have learned of these roads from Evans' map of the middle colonies made at about this time, which he possessed, and from traders and provincials who were familiar with the country. The expedition must, indeed, have failed had it not been for Franklin's device to secure the wagons, and even that would have been ineffective if he had

not personally given a pledge that the farmers should be repaid for losses. Poor Richard they all knew, but experience had made the colonists suspicious of the promises of English officials. In the outcome, it would seem that Franklin narrowly escaped bankruptcy; for the general who had promised to recoup him was killed, and it is difficult to collect pay from a distant government for horses that have been lost. This threatened disaster, however, was averted by Braddock's successor, General Shirley, with whom Franklin had formed a friendship on the occasion of the Albany convention and later in Boston. Shirley was shrewd enough to understand the importance of securing the coöperation of the most influential citizen of Pennsylvania and of his paper. He was also dependent on Franklin's aid in arranging special mail service for expeditions.

In the military expedition to build forts on the Delaware which Franklin himself commanded, we see him acting in a new capacity, but he is still the shrewd, practical, self-made man, with his scientific habit of careful attention to details. He built forts and managed his men without displaying the least interest in military affairs as such.

These military affairs, though relatively unimportant in Franklin's career, are given much space in the *Autobiography* because of their importance in colonial history. It pleased the old man who had recently signed the famous treaty of peace to remember the beginnings of his own part in public affairs.

D.

Franklin's Outline. My commission to defend the frontier counties. Raise Men and build Forts. Militia Law of my drawing. Made Colonel. Parade of my Officers. Offence to Proprietor. Assistance to Boston Ambassadors. Journey with Shirley, &c. Meet with Braddock. Assistance to him. To the Officers of his Army. Furnish him with Forage. His concessions to me and character of me.

War being in a manner commenced with France, the government of Massachusetts Bay projected an attack upon Crown Point, and sent Mr. Quincy to Pennsylvania, and Mr. Pownall, afterward Governor Pownall, to New York, to solicit assistance. As I was in the Assembly, knew its temper, and was Mr. Quincy's countryman, he applied to me for my influence and assistance. I dictated his address to them, which was well received. They voted an aid of ten thousand pounds, to be laid out in provisions. But the governor refusing his assent to their bill (which included this with other sums granted for the use of the crown), unless a clause were inserted exempting the proprietary estate from bearing any part of the tax that would be necessary, the Assembly, though very desirous of making their grant to New England effectual, were at a loss how to accomplish it. Mr. Quincy labored hard with the governor to obtain his assent, but he was obstinate.

I then suggested a method of doing the business without the governor, by orders on the trustees of the Loan Office, which, by law, the Assembly had the right of drawing. There was, indeed, little or no money at that time in the office, and therefore I proposed that the orders should be payable in a year, and to bear an interest of five per cent. With these orders I supposed the provisions might easily be purchased. The Assembly, with very little hesitation, adopted the proposal. The orders were immediately printed, and I was one of the committee directed to sign and dispose of them. The fund for paying them was the interest of all the paper currency then extant in the province upon loan, together

with the revenue arising from the excise, which being known to be more than sufficient, they obtained instant credit, and were not only received in payment for the provisions, but many moneyed people, who had cash lying by them, vested it in those orders, which they found advantageous, as they bore interest while upon hand, and might on any occasion be used as money, so that they were eagerly all bought up, and in a few weeks none of them were to be seen. Thus this important affair was by my means completed. Mr. Quincy returned thanks to the Assembly in a handsome memorial, went home highly pleased with the success of his embassy, and ever after bore for me the most cordial and affectionate friendship.

The British government, not choosing to permit the union of the colonies as proposed at Albany, and to trust that union with their defence, lest they should thereby grow too military and feel their own strength, suspicions and jealousies at this time being entertained of them, sent over General Braddock with two regiments of regular English troops for that purpose. He landed at Alexandria,[1] in Virginia, and thence marched to Fredericktown, in Maryland, where he halted for carriages. Our Assembly apprehending, from some information, that he had conceived violent prejudices against them, as averse to the service, wished me to wait upon him, not as from them, but as postmaster-general, under the guise of proposing to settle with him the mode of conducting with most celerity and certainty the despatches between him and the governors of the several provinces, with whom

[1] Braddock himself had landed at Hampton in Virginia, in February; in April, he went to the camp at Alexandria where, as commander-in-chief for the Colonies, he had summoned a council of governors from all the Provinces to meet him.

he must necessarily have continual correspondence, and of which they proposed to pay the expense. My son accompanied me on this journey.

We found the general at Fredericktown, waiting impatiently for the return of those he had sent through the back parts of Maryland and Virginia to collect wagons. I stayed with him several days, dined with him daily, and had full opportunity of removing all his prejudices, by the information of what the Assembly had before his arrival actually done, and were still willing to do, to facilitate his operations. When I was about to depart, the returns of wagons to be obtained were brought in, by which it appeared that they amounted only to twenty-five, and not all of those were in serviceable condition. The general and all the officers were surprised, declared the expedition was then at an end, being impossible, and exclaimed against the ministers for ignorantly landing them in a country destitute of the means of conveying their stores, baggage, etc., not less than one hundred and fifty wagons being necessary.

I happened to say I thought it was a pity they had not been landed rather in Pennsylvania, as in that country almost every farmer had his wagon. The general eagerly laid hold of my words, and said, "Then you, sir, who are a man of interest there, can probably procure them for us; and I beg you will undertake it." I asked what terms were to be offered the owners of the wagons; and I was desired to put on paper the terms that appeared to me necessary. This I did, and they were agreed to, and a commission and instructions accordingly prepared immediately. What those terms were will appear in the

advertisement I published as soon as I arrived at Lancaster, which being, from the great and sudden effect it produced, a piece of some curiosity, I shall insert it at length, as follows:

"ADVERTISEMENT.

"LANCASTER, *April* 26, 1755.

"Whereas, one hundred and fifty wagons, with four horses to each wagon, and fifteen hundred saddle or pack

"CONESTOGA" WAGON OF PENNSYLVANIA

horses, are wanted for the service of his majesty's forces now about to rendezvous at Will's Creek, and his excellency General Braddock having been pleased to empower me to contract for the hire of the same, I hereby give notice that I shall attend for that purpose at Lancaster from this day to next Wednesday evening, and at York from next Thursday morning till Friday evening, where I shall be ready to agree for wagons and teams, or single horses, on the following terms, viz.: 1. That there shall

be paid for each wagon, with four good horses and a driver, fifteen shillings per diem; and for each able horse with a pack-saddle or other saddle and furniture, two shillings per diem; and for each able horse without a saddle, eighteen pence per diem. 2. That the pay commence from the time of their joining the forces at Will's Creek, which must be on or before the 20th of May ensuing, and that a reasonable allowance be paid over and above for the time necessary for their travelling to Will's Creek and home again after their discharge. 3. Each wagon and team, and every saddle or pack horse, is to be valued by indifferent persons chosen between me and the owner; and in case of the loss of any wagon, team, or other horse in the service, the price according to such valuation is to be allowed and paid. 4. Seven days' pay is to be advanced and paid in hand by me to the owner of each wagon and team or horse, at the time of contracting, if required, and the remainder to be paid by General Braddock, or by the paymaster of the army, at the time of their discharge, or from time to time, as it shall be demanded. 5. No drivers of wagons, or persons taking care of the hired horses, are on any account to be called upon to do the duty of soldiers, or to be otherwise employed than in conducting or taking care of their carriages or horses. 6. All oats, Indian corn, or other forage that wagons or horses bring to the camp, more than is necessary for the subsistence of the horses, is to be taken for the use of the army, and a reasonable price paid for the same.

"Note. — My son, William Franklin, is empowered to enter into like contracts with any person in Cumberland county.

B. FRANKLIN."

"*To the Inhabitants of the Counties of Lancaster, York, and Cumberland.*

"Friends and Countrymen:

"Being occasionally at the camp at Frederick a few days since, I found the general and officers extremely exasperated on account of their not being supplied with horses and carriages, which had been expected from this province, as most able to furnish them; but, through the dissensions between our governor and Assembly, money had not been provided, nor any steps taken for that purpose.

"It was proposed to send an armed force immediately into these counties, to seize as many of the best carriages and horses as should be wanted, and compel as many persons into the service as would be necessary to drive and take care of them.

"I apprehended that the progress of British soldiers through these counties on such an occasion, especially considering the temper they are in, and their resentment against us, would be attended with many and great inconveniences to the inhabitants, and therefore more willingly took the trouble of trying first what might be done by fair and equitable means. The people of these back counties have lately complained to the Assembly that a sufficient currency was wanting; you have an opportunity of receiving and dividing among you a very considerable sum; for, if the service of this expedition should continue, as it is more than probable it will, for one hundred and twenty days, the hire of these wagons and horses will amount to upward of thirty thousand pounds,

which will be paid you in silver and gold of the king's money.

"The service will be light and easy, for the army will scarce march above twelve miles per day, and the wagons and baggage-horses, as they carry those things that are absolutely necessary to the welfare of the army, must march with the army, and no faster; and are, for the army's sake, always placed where they can be most secure, whether in a march or in a camp.

"If you are really, as I believe you are, good and loyal subjects to his majesty, you may now do a most acceptable service, and make it easy to yourselves; for three or four of such as can not separately spare from the business of their plantations a wagon and four horses and a driver, may do it together, one furnishing the wagon, another one or two horses, and another the driver, and divide the pay proportionably between you; but if you do not this service to your king and country voluntarily, when such good pay and reasonable terms are offered to you, your loyalty will be strongly suspected. The king's business must be done; so many brave troops, come so far for your defence, must not stand idle through your backwardness to do what may be reasonably expected from you; wagons and horses must be had; violent measures will probably be used, and you will be left to seek for a recompense where you can find it, and your case, perhaps, be little pitied or regarded.

"I have no particular interest in this affair, as, except the satisfaction of endeavoring to do good, I shall have only my labor for my pains. If this method of obtaining the wagons and horses is not likely to succeed, I am

obliged to send word to the general in fourteen days; and I suppose Sir John St. Clair, the hussar, with a body of soldiers, will immediately enter the province for the purpose, which I shall be sorry to hear, because I am very sincerely and truly your friend and well-wisher,

"B. FRANKLIN."

I received of the general about eight hundred pounds, to be disbursed in advance-money to the wagon owners, etc., but that sum being insufficient, I advanced upward of two hundred pounds more, and in two weeks the one hundred and fifty wagons, with two hundred and fifty-nine carrying horses, were on their march for the camp. The advertisement promised payment according to the valuation, in case any wagon or horse should be lost. The owners, however, alleging they did not know General Braddock, or what dependence might be had on his promise, insisted on my bond for the performance, which I accordingly gave them.

While I was at the camp, supping one evening with the officers of Colonel Dunbar's regiment, he represented to me his concern for the subalterns, who, he said, were generally not in affluence, and could ill afford, in this dear country, to lay in the stores that might be necessary in so long a march, through a wilderness, where nothing was to be purchased. I commiserated their case, and resolved to endeavor procuring them some relief. I said nothing, however, to him of my intention, but wrote the next morning to the committee of the Assembly, who had the disposition of some public money, warmly recommending the case of these officers to their consideration,

and proposing that a present should be sent them of necessaries and refreshments. My son, who had some experience of a camp life, and of its wants, drew up a list for me, which I enclosed in my letter. The committee approved, and used such diligence that, conducted by my son, the stores arrived at the camp as soon as the wagons. They consisted of twenty parcels, each containing—

6 lbs. loaf sugar.
6 lbs. good Muscovado do.
1 lb. good green tea.
1 lb. good bohea do.
6 lbs. good ground coffee.
6 lbs. chocolate.
1-2 cwt. best white biscuit.
1-2 lb. pepper.
1 quart best white wine vinegar.
1 Gloucester cheese.
1 keg containing 20 lbs. good butter.
2 doz. old Madeira wine.
2 gallons Jamaica spirits.
1 bottle flour of mustard.
2 well-cured hams.
1-2 dozen dried tongues.
6 lbs. rice.
6 lbs. raisins.

These twenty parcels, well packed, were placed on as many horses, each parcel, with the horse, being intended as a present for one officer. They were very thankfully received, and the kindness acknowledged by letters to me from the colonels of both regiments, in the most grateful terms. The general, too, was highly satisfied with my conduct in procuring him the wagons, etc., and readily paid my account of disbursements, thanking me repeatedly, and requesting my farther assistance in sending provisions after him. I undertook this also, and was busily employed in it till we heard of his defeat, advancing for the service of my own money upwards of one thousand pounds sterling, of which I sent him an account. It came to his hands, luckily for me, a few days before the battle, and he returned me immediately an order on

the paymaster for the round sum of one thousand pounds, leaving the remainder to the next account. I consider this payment as good luck, having never been able to obtain that remainder, of which more hereafter.

This general was, I think, a brave man, and might probably have made a figure as a good officer in some European war. But he had too much self-confidence, too high an opinion of the validity of regular troops, and too mean a one of both Americans and Indians. George Croghan,[1] our Indian interpreter, joined him on his march with one hundred of those people, who might have been of great use to his army as guides, scouts, etc., if he had treated them kindly; but he slighted and neglected them, and they gradually left him.

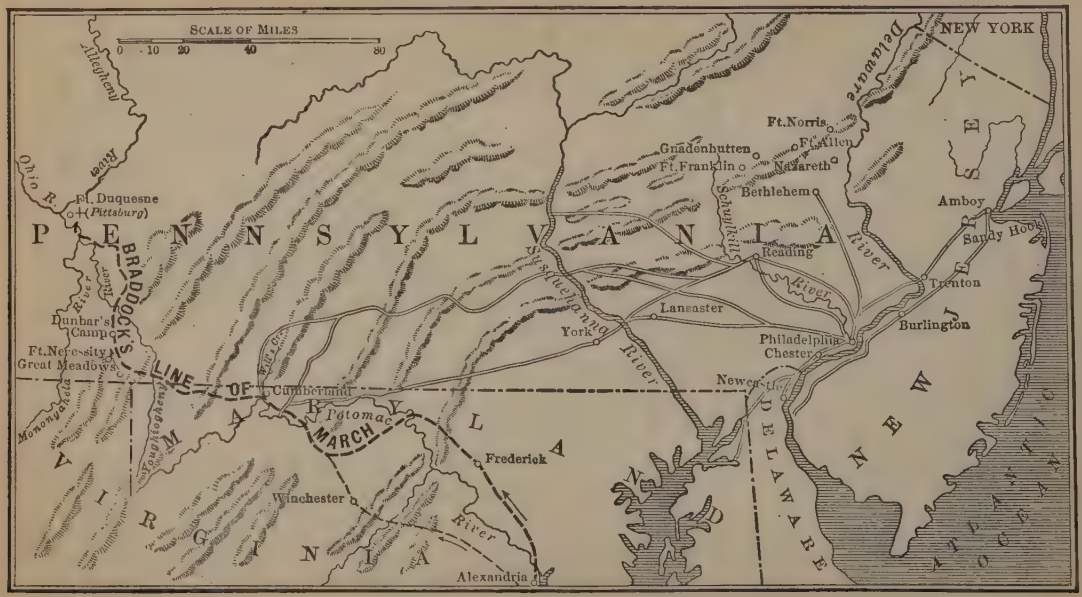
In conversation with him one day, he was giving me some account of his intended progress. "After taking Fort Duquesne," says he, "I am to proceed to Niagara; and, having taken that, to Frontenac, if the season will allow time; and I suppose it will, for Duquesne can hardly detain me above three or four days; and then I see nothing that can obstruct my march to Niagara." Having before resolved in my mind the long line his army must make in their march by a very narrow road, to be cut for them through the woods and bushes, and also what I had read of a former defeat of fifteen hundred French, who invaded the Iroquois country, I had conceived some doubts and some fears for the event of the campaign. But I ventured only to say, "To be sure, sir,

[1] George Croghan was an Indian trader in Pennsylvania as early as 1746. He was Captain of Provincials in Braddock's expedition. He attempted to secure the aid of a band of Indian warriors for Braddock, but the Indians whom he brought into camp understood that the English despised them, and nearly all left.

if you arrive well before Duquesne, with these fine troops, so well provided with artillery, that place not yet completely fortified, and as we hear with no very strong garrison, can probably make but a short resistance. The only danger I apprehend of obstruction to your march is from ambuscades of Indians, who, by constant practice, are dexterous in laying and executing them; and the slender line, near four miles long, which your army must make, may expose it to be attacked by surprise in its flanks, and to be cut like a thread into several pieces, which, from their distance, cannot come up in time to support each other."

He smiled at my ignorance, and replied, "These savages may, indeed, be a formidable enemy to your raw American militia, but upon the king's regular and disciplined troops, sir, it is impossible they should make any impression."[1] I was conscious of an impropriety in my disputing with a military man in matters of his profession, and said no more. The enemy, however, did not take the advantage of his army which I apprehended its long line of march exposed it to, but let it advance without interruption till within nine miles of the place; and then, when more in a body (for it had just passed a river, where the front had halted till all were come over), and in a more open part of the woods than any it had passed, attacked its advanced guard by a heavy fire from behind trees and bushes, which was the first intelligence the general had of an enemy's being near him. This guard

[1] Parkman, in chapter vii, vol. i, *Montcalm and Wolfe*, discusses at length Braddock's attitude toward the Provincials. When it was too late, he recognized his great mistake, and in his last hours he "murmured praises" of the blues, the Virginia troops, and hoped that "he might live to reward them."



ROUTE OF BRADDOCK'S MARCH

After Mitchell's Map, 1755

being disordered, the general hurried the troops up to their assistance, which was done in great confusion, through wagons, baggage, and cattle; and presently the fire came upon their flank: the officers, being on horseback, were more easily distinguished, picked out as marks, and fell very fast; and the soldiers were crowded together in a huddle, having or hearing no orders, and standing to be shot at till two-thirds of them were killed; and then, being seized with a panic, the whole fled with precipitation.

The wagoners took each a horse out of his team and scampered; their example was immediately followed by others; so that all the wagons, provisions, artillery, and stores were left to the enemy. The general, being wounded, was brought off with difficulty; his secretary, Mr. Shirley,[1] was killed by his side; and out of eighty-six officers, sixty-three were killed or wounded, and seven hundred and fourteen men killed out of eleven hundred. These eleven hundred had been picked men from the whole army; the rest had been left behind with Colonel Dunbar, who was to follow with the heavier part of the stores, provisions, and baggage. The flyers, not being pursued, arrived at Dunbar's camp, and the panic they brought with them instantly seized him and all his people; and, though he had now above one thousand men, and the enemy who had beaten Braddock did not at most exceed four hundred Indians and French together, instead of proceeding, and endeavoring to recover some of the lost honor, he ordered all the stores, ammunition,

[1] William Shirley, son of Governor Shirley. Before starting on the expedition he had written to a friend, "We have a general most judiciously chosen for being disqualified for the service he is employed in in almost every respect."

etc., to be destroyed, that he might have more horses to assist his flight towards the settlements, and less lumber to remove. He was there met with requests from the governors of Virginia, Maryland, and Pennsylvania, that he would post his troops on the frontiers, so as to afford some protection to the inhabitants; but he continued his hasty march through all the country, not thinking himself safe till he arrived at Philadelphia, where the inhabitants could protect him. This whole transaction gave us Americans the first suspicion that our exalted ideas of the prowess of British regulars had not been well founded.

In their first march, too, from their landing till they got beyond the settlements, they had plundered and stripped the inhabitants, totally ruining some poor families, besides insulting, abusing, and confining the people if they remonstrated. This was enough to put us out of conceit of such defenders, if we had really wanted any. How different was the conduct of our French friends in 1781, who, during a march through the most inhabited part of our country from Rhode Island to Virginia, near seven hundred miles, occasioned not the smallest complaint for the loss of a pig, a chicken, or even an apple.

Captain Orme, who was one of the general's aides-de-camp, and, being grievously wounded, was brought off with him, and continued with him to his death, which happened in a few days, told me that he was totally silent all day, and at night only said, "*Who would have thought it?*" That he was silent again the following day, saying only at last, "*We shall better know how to deal with them another time;*" and died in a few minutes after.

The secretary's papers, with all the general's orders, instructions, and correspondence, falling into the enemy's hands, they selected and translated into French a number of the articles, which they printed, to prove the hostile intentions of the British court before the declaration of war. Among these I saw some letters of the general to the ministry, speaking highly of the great service I had rendered the army, and recommending me to their notice. David Hume, too, who was some years after secretary to Lord Hertford, when minister in France, and afterward to General Conway, when secretary of state, told me he had seen among the papers in that office, letters from Braddock highly recommending me. But the expedition having been unfortunate, my service, it seems, was not thought of much value, for those recommendations were never of any use to me.

As to rewards from himself, I asked only one, which was that he would give orders to his officers not to enlist any more of our bought servants, and that he would discharge such as had been already enlisted. This he readily granted, and several were accordingly returned to their masters, on my application. Dunbar, when the command devolved on him, was not so generous. He being at Philadelphia, on his retreat or rather flight, I applied to him for the discharge of the servants of three poor farmers of Lancaster county that he had enlisted, reminding him of the late general's orders on that head. He promised me that, if the masters would come to him at Trenton, where he should be in a few days on his march to New York, he would there deliver their men to them. They accordingly were at the expense and trouble of

going to Trenton, and there he refused to perform his promise, to their great loss and disappointment.

As soon as the loss of the wagons and horses was generally known, all the owners came upon me for the valuation which I had given bond to pay. Their demands gave me a great deal of trouble, my acquainting them that the money was ready in the paymaster's hands, but that orders for paying it must first be obtained from General Shirley, and my assuring them that I had applied to that general by letter; but, he being at a distance, an answer could not soon be received, and they must have patience; all this was not sufficient to satisfy, and some began to sue me. General Shirley at length relieved me from this terrible situation by appointing commissioners to examine the claims, and ordering payment. They amounted to near twenty thousand pounds, which to pay would have ruined me.

Before we had the news of this defeat, the two Doctors Bond came to me with a subscription paper for raising money to defray the expense of a grand firework, which it was intended to exhibit at a rejoicing on receipt of the news of our taking Fort Duquesne. I looked grave, and said it would, I thought, be time enough to prepare for the rejoicing when we knew we should have occasion to rejoice. They seemed surprised that I did not immediately comply with their proposal. "Why!" says one of them, "you surely don't suppose that the fort will not be taken?" "I don't know that it will not be taken, but I know that the events of war are subject to great uncertainty." I gave them the reasons of my doubting; the subscription was dropped, and the pro-

jectors thereby missed the mortification they would have undergone if the firework had been prepared. Dr. Bond, on some other occasion afterward, said that he did not like Franklin's forebodings.

Governor Morris, who had continually worried the Assembly with message after message before the defeat of Braddock, to beat them into the making of acts to raise money for the defence of the province without taxing, among others, the proprietary estates, and had rejected all their bills for not having such an exempting clause, now redoubled his attacks with more hope of success, the danger and necessity being greater. The Assembly, however, continued firm, believing they had justice on their side, and that it would be giving up an essential right if they suffered the governor to amend their money-bills. In one of the last, indeed, which was for granting fifty thousand pounds, his proposed amendment was only of a single word. The bill expressed "that all estates, real and personal, were to be taxed, those of the proprietaries *not* excepted." His amendment was, for *not* read *only:* a small but very material alteration. However, when the news of this disaster reached England, our friends there, whom we had taken care to furnish with all the Assembly's answers to the governor's messages, raised a clamor against the proprietaries for their meanness and injustice in giving their governor such instructions; some going so far as to say that by obstructing the defence of their province they forfeited their right to it. They were intimidated by this, and sent orders to their receiver-general to add five thousand pounds of their money to whatever sum might be given by the Assembly for such purpose.

This, being notified to the House, was accepted in lieu of their share of a general tax, and a new bill was formed, with an exempting clause, which passed accordingly. By this act I was appointed one of the commissioners for disposing of the money, sixty thousand pounds. I had been active in modelling the bill and procuring its passage, and had, at the same time, drawn a bill for establishing and disciplining a voluntary militia, which I carried through the House without much difficulty, as care was taken in it to leave the Quakers at their liberty. To promote the association necessary to form the militia, I wrote a dialogue, stating and answering all the objections I could think of to such a militia, which was printed, and had, as I thought, great effect.

While the several companies in the city and country were forming, and learning their exercise, the governor prevailed with me to take charge of our northwestern frontier, which was infested by the enemy, and provide for the defence of the inhabitants by raising troops and building a line of forts. I undertook this military business, though I did not conceive myself well qualified for it. He gave me a commission with full powers, and a parcel of blank commissions for officers, to be given to whom I thought fit. I had but little difficulty in raising men, having soon five hundred and sixty under my command. My son,[1] who had in the preceding war been an officer in the army raised against Canada, was my aide-de-camp, and of great use to me. The Indians had burned Gnadenhut, a village settled by the Moravians,

[1] Franklin's son William had joined the expedition sent against Canada in 1746. Men were enlisted in Pennsylvania "by order of the Crown," without official recognition by the Assembly.

and massacred the inhabitants; but the place was thought a good situation for one of the forts.

In order to march thither, I assembled the companies at Bethlehem, the chief establishment of those people. I was surprised to find it in so good a posture of defence; the destruction of Gnadenhut had made them apprehend danger. The principal buildings were defended by a stockade; they had purchased a quantity of arms and ammunition from New York, and had even placed quantities of small paving stones between the windows of their high stone houses for their women to throw down upon the heads of any Indians that should attempt to force into them. The armed brethren, too, kept watch, and relieved as methodically as any garrison town. In conversation with the bishop, Spangenberg, I mentioned this my surprise; for, knowing they had obtained an act of Parliament exempting them from military duties in the colonies, I had supposed they were conscientiously scrupulous of bearing arms. He answered me that it was not one of their established principles, but that, at the time of their obtaining that act, it was thought to be a principle with many of their people. On this occasion, however, they, to their surprise, found it adopted by but a few. It seems they were either deceived in themselves or deceived the Parliament; but common sense, aided by present danger, will sometimes be too strong for whimsical opinions.

It was the beginning of January when we set out upon this business of building forts. I sent one detachment toward the Minisink, with instructions to erect one for the security of that upper part of the country, and an-

other to the lower part, with similar instructions; and I concluded to go myself with the rest of my force to Gnadenhut, where a fort was thought more immediately necessary. The Moravians procured me five wagons for our tools, stores, baggage, etc.

Just before we left Bethlehem, eleven farmers, who

THE OLD MILL AT BETHLEHEM, PA.
Built in 1751, and burned in 1869

had been driven from their plantations by the Indians, came to me requesting a supply of firearms, that they might go back and fetch off their cattle. I gave them each a gun with suitable ammunition. We had not marched many miles before it began to rain, and it continued raining all day; there were no habitations on the road to shelter us, till we arrived near night at the house of a German, where, and in his barn, we were all huddled together, as wet as water could make us. It was well we were not attacked in our march, for our arms were of

the most ordinary sort, and our men could not keep their gunlocks dry. The Indians are dexterous in contrivances for that purpose, which we had not. They met that day the eleven poor farmers above mentioned, and killed ten of them. The one who escaped informed that his and his companions' guns would not go off, the priming being wet with the rain.

The next day being fair, we continued our march and arrived at the desolated Gnadenhut. There was a saw-mill near, round which were left several piles of boards, with which we soon hutted ourselves; an operation the more necessary at that inclement season as we had no tents. Our first work was to bury more effectually the dead we found there, who had been half interred by the country people.

The next morning our fort was planned and marked out, the circumference measuring four hundred and fifty-five feet, which would require as many palisades to be made of trees, one with another, of a foot diameter each. Our axes, of which we had seventy, were immediately set to work to cut down trees, and, our men being dexterous in the use of them, great dispatch was made. Seeing the trees fall so fast, I had the curiosity to look at my watch when two men began to cut at a pine; in six minutes they had it upon the ground, and I found it of fourteen inches diameter. Each pine made three palisades of eighteen feet long, pointed at one end. While these were preparing, our other men dug a trench all round, of three feet deep, in which the palisades were to be planted; and our wagons, the bodies being taken off, and the fore and hind wheels separated by taking out

the pin which united the two parts of the perch, we had ten carriages, with two horses each, to bring the palisades from the woods to the spot. When they were set up, our carpenters built a stage of boards all round within, about six feet high, for the men to stand on when to fire through the loopholes. We had one swivel gun, which we mounted on one of the angles, and fired it as soon as fixed, to let the Indians know, if any were within hearing, that we had such pieces; and thus our fort, if such a magnificent name may be given to so miserable a stockade, was finished in a week, though it rained so hard every other day that the men could not work.

This gave me occasion to observe, that when men are employed they are best contented; for on the days they worked they were good-natured and cheerful, and, with the consciousness of having done a good day's work, they spent the evening jollily; but on our idle days they were mutinous and quarrelsome, finding fault with their pork, the bread, etc., and in continual ill-humor, which put me in mind of a sea-captain, whose rule it was to keep his men constantly at work; and when his mate once told him that they had done everything, and there was nothing further to employ them about, "*Oh*," says he, "*make them scour the anchor.*"

This kind of fort, however contemptible, is a sufficient defence against Indians, who have no cannon. Finding ourselves now posted securely, and having a place to retreat to on occasion, we ventured out in parties to scour the adjacent country. We met with no Indians, but we found the places on the neighboring

hills where they had lain to watch our proceedings. There was an art in their contrivance of those places that seems worth mention. It being winter, a fire was necessary for them; but a common fire on the surface of the ground would by its light have discovered their position at a distance. They had therefore dug holes in the ground about three feet diameter and somewhat deeper; we saw where they had with their hatchets cut off the charcoal from the sides of burnt logs lying in the woods. With these coals they had made small fires in the bottom of the holes, and we observed among the weeds and grass the prints of their bodies, made by their lying all round, with their legs hanging down in the holes to keep their feet warm, which with them is an essential point. This kind of fire, so managed, could not discover them, either by its light, flame, sparks, or even smoke: it appeared that their number was not great, and it seems they saw we were too many to be attacked by them with prospect of advantage.

We had for our chaplain a zealous Presbyterian minister, Mr. Beatty, who complained to me that the men did not generally attend his prayers and exhortations. When they enlisted, they were promised, besides pay and provisions, a gill of rum a day, which was punctually served out to them, half in the morning and the other half in the evening, and I observed they were as punctual in attending to receive it; upon which I said to Mr. Beatty, "It is, perhaps, below the dignity of your profession to act as steward of the rum, but if you were to deal it out and only just after prayers, you would have them all about you." He liked the thought, under-

took the office, and, with the help of a few hands to measure out the liquor, executed it to satisfaction, and never were prayers more generally and more punctually attended; so that I thought this method preferable to the punishment inflicted by some military laws for non-attendance on divine service.

I had hardly finished this business, and got my fort well stored with provisions, when I received a letter from the governor, acquainting me that he had called the Assembly, and wished my attendance there, if the posture of affairs on the frontiers was such that my remaining there was no longer necessary. My friends, too, of the Assembly, pressing me by their letters to be, if possible, at the meeting, and my three intended forts being now completed, and the inhabitants contented to remain on their farms under that protection, I resolved to return; the more willingly, as a New England officer, Colonel Clapham, experienced in Indian war, being on a visit to our establishment, consented to accept the command. I gave him a commission, and, parading the garrison, had it read before them, and introduced him to them as an officer who, from his skill in military affairs, was much more fit to command them than myself; and, giving them a little exhortation, took my leave. I was escorted as far as Bethlehem, where I rested a few days to recover from the fatigue I had undergone. The first night, being in a good bed, I could hardly sleep, it was so different from my hard lodging on the floor of our hut at Gnaden, wrapped only in a blanket or two.

While at Bethlehem, I inquired a little into the practice of the Moravians: some of them had accompanied

me, and all were very kind to me. I found they worked for a common stock, eat at common tables, and slept in common dormitories, great numbers together. In the dormitories I observed loopholes, at certain distances all along just under the ceiling, which I thought judiciously placed for change of air. I was at their church, where I was entertained with good music, the organ being accompanied with violins, hautboys, flutes, clarinets, etc. I understood that their sermons were not usually preached to mixed congregations of men, women, and children, as is our common practice, but that they assembled sometimes the married men, at other times their wives, then the young men, the young women, and the little children, each division by itself. The sermon I heard was to the latter, who came in and were placed in rows on benches; the boys under the conduct of a young man, their tutor, and the girls conducted by a young woman. The discourse seemed well adapted to their capacities, and was delivered in a pleasing, familiar manner, coaxing them, as it were, to be good. They behaved very orderly, but looked pale and unhealthy, which made me suspect they were kept too much within doors, or not allowed sufficient exercise.

I inquired concerning the Moravian marriages, whether the report was true that they were by lot. I was told that lots were used only in particular cases; that generally, when a young man found himself disposed to marry, he informed the elders of his class, who consulted the elder ladies that governed the young women. As these elders of the different sexes were well acquainted with the tempers and dispositions of their respective pupils, they

could best judge what matches were suitable, and their judgments were generally acquiesced in; but if, for example, it should happen that two or three young women were found to be equally proper for the young man, the lot was then recurred to. I objected, if the matches are not made by the mutual choice of parties, some of them may chance to be very unhappy. "And so they may," answered my informer, "if you let the parties choose for themselves;" which, indeed, I could not deny.

Being returned to Philadelphia, I found the association went on swimmingly, the inhabitants that were not Quakers having pretty generally come into it, formed themselves into companies, and chose their captains, lieutenants, and ensigns, according to the new law. Dr. B. visited me, and gave me an account of the pains he had taken to spread a general good liking to the law, and ascribed much to those endeavors. I had had the vanity to ascribe all to my *Dialogue;* however, not knowing but that he might be in the right, I let him enjoy his opinion, which I take to be generally the best way in such cases. The officers, meeting, chose me to be colonel of the regiment, which I this time accepted. I forget how many companies we had, but we paraded about twelve hundred well-looking men, with a company of artillery, who had been furnished with six brass field-pieces, which they had become so expert in the use of as to fire twelve times in a minute. The first time I reviewed my regiment they accompanied me to my house, and would salute me with some rounds fired before my door, which shook down and broke several glasses of my electrical apparatus. And my new honor proved not

much less brittle; for all our commissions were soon after broken by a repeal of the law in England.

During this short time of my colonelship, being about to set out on a journey to Virginia, the officers of my regiment took it into their heads that it would be proper for them to escort me out of town, as far as the Lower Ferry. Just as I was getting on horseback they came to my door, between thirty and forty, mounted, and all in their uniforms. I had not been previously acquainted with the project, or I should have prevented it, being naturally averse to the assuming of state on any occasion; and I was a good deal chagrined at their appearance, as I could not avoid their accompanying me. What made it worse was, that, as soon as we began to move, they drew their swords and rode with them naked all the way. Somebody wrote an account of this to the proprietor, and it gave him great offence.[1] No such honor had been paid him when in the province, nor to any of his governors; and he said it was only proper to princes of the blood royal, which may be true for aught I know, who was, and still am, ignorant of the etiquette in such cases.

This silly affair, however, greatly increased his rancor against me, which was before not a little, on account of my conduct in the Assembly respecting the exemption of his estate from taxation, which I had always opposed very warmly, and not without severe reflections on his meanness and injustice of contending for it. He accused me to the ministry as being the great obstacle to the

[1] An explanation of how this came about is given in a letter to Peter Collinson. S. III. p. 347.

king's service, preventing, by my influence in the House, the proper form of the bills for raising money, and he instanced this parade with my officers as a proof of my having an intention to take the government of the province out of his hands by force. He also applied to Sir Everard Fawkener, the postmaster-general, to deprive

The British Barracks in Philadelphia

me of my office; but it had no other effect than to procure from Sir Everard a gentle admonition.[1]

Notwithstanding the continual wrangle between the governor and the House, in which I, as a member, had so large a share, there still subsisted a civil intercourse

[1] In a private letter to his friend Collinson, Franklin described the governor as, like "St. George on the sign, always a-horseback and never going on." Then added, "Did you never hear this old catch?

"'There was a mad man — he had a mad Wife,
And three mad sons beside;
And they all got upon a mad Horse
And madly they did ride?'

'T is a compendium of our proceedings and may save you the trouble of reading them." S. III. p. 265.

between that gentleman and myself, and we never had any personal difference. I have sometimes since thought that his little or no resentment against me, for the answers it was known I drew up to his messages, might be the effect of professional habit, and that, being bred a lawyer, he might consider us both as merely advocates for contending clients in a suit, he for the proprietaries and I for the Assembly. He would, therefore, sometimes call in a friendly way to advise with me on difficult points, and sometimes, though not often, take my advice.

We acted in concert to supply Braddock's army with provisions; and when the shocking news arrived of his defeat, the governor sent in haste for me to consult with him on measures for preventing the desertion of the back counties. I forget now the advice I gave; but I think it was, that Dunbar should be written to, and prevailed with, if possible, to post his troops on the frontiers for their protection, till, by reënforcements from the colonies, he might be able to proceed on the expedition. And, after my return from the frontier, he would have had me undertake the conduct of such an expedition with provincial troops, for the reduction of Fort Duquesne, Dunbar and his men being otherwise employed; and he proposed to commission me as general. I had not so good an opinion of my military abilities as he professed to have, and I believe his professions must have exceeded his real sentiments; but probably he might think that my popularity would facilitate the raising of the men, and my influence in Assembly, the grant of money to pay them, and that, perhaps, without taxing the proprietary estate. Finding me not so forward to

engage as he expected, the project was dropped, and he soon after left the government, being superseded by Captain Denny.

Before I proceed in relating the part I had in public affairs under this new governor's administration, it may not be amiss here to give some account of the rise and progress of my philosophical reputation.

XI. Experiments in Electricity. Member of Royal Society, London

1746–1756

Comment. Franklin's success in scientific experiments and his discoveries have been somewhat obscured in popular estimation by his distinguished service in promoting the formation and recognition of our government. But we should not forget that for many years he was one of the greatest of living scientists. Yet no man was ever more sincere and modest in regard to his own scientific studies. We must sometimes pardon the self-satisfied tone of the successful man, when he refers to the general tenor of his life, or to his own part in affairs of importance, but in his experiments and studies he showed a genuinely scientific spirit, and, more wonderful still, he at once perceived the dependence of scientific knowledge upon careful, repeated, unprejudiced observation. "I wish," he writes a friend, "I had more of your patience and accuracy in making observations on which alone true philosophy can be founded. And I assure you nothing can be more obliging to me than your kind communication of those you make, however they may disagree with my preconceived notions."

From the beginning, he kept a sort of laboratory note-book, even as men do now, entering in it minutes of the experiments he made "with memorandums"[1] of such as he purposed to make, the reasons for making them, and the observations that arose upon them. From this note-book, he quoted for one of his correspondents a list of observations made upon experiments to determine in what particulars the electrical fluid agrees with lightning.[2] Of his inventiveness and skill in making experiments, Lord Brougham said, "He could make an

[1] Franklin's spelling.

[2] S. III. p. 255.

experiment with less apparatus and conduct his experimental inquiry to a discovery with more ordinary materials than any other philosopher we ever saw. With an old key, a silk thread, some sealing wax, and a sheet of paper he discovered the identity of lightning and electricity." "A singular felicity," said Sir Humphrey Davy, "guided all Franklin's researches and by very small means he established very grand truths. The manner and style of his publication on electricity are almost as worthy of admiration as the doctrine it contains."

The clearness, accuracy, and far-reaching character of Franklin's thought on scientific subjects is even more remarkable than the inventive genius shown in his experiments. In science, the men who experiment are like an army of engineers building a road into an unknown country; each new section completed, becomes, in turn, the way over which the builders go to make the next. So, in scientific knowledge, each generation makes some small advance at the price of a lifetime of effort; in the next, young scientists pass quickly over whatever has been done before, beginning their own researches where the older men ceased. Only men of the clearest mind, of the greatest power, outrun their own fellow workers and anticipate in their conclusions the results to be won by later generations of scientists. One of these was Benjamin Franklin, but in proof of this opinion we can rely only upon the testimony of the scientific men of our own time, for the rest of us are unable to compare his discoveries and explanations with the present state of knowledge. One of these, J. J. Thomson, in *Electricity and Matter*, published in 1904, says, "We shall, I am sure, be struck by the similarity between some of the views which we are led to take by the results of the most recent researches, with those enunciated by Franklin in the very infancy of the subject."

Again, in *Heroes of Science*, 1885, Dr. William Garnett says that the statements in Franklin's first letters to Collinson on the subject of electricity "are perfectly consistent with the

views held by Cavendish and by Clerk Maxwell, and though the phraseology is not that of the modern text-books, the statements themselves can hardly be improved upon to-day." [1] We cannot doubt the conclusion reached by the editor of the latest edition of Franklin's writings, namely, that "no other mind as acute as Franklin's existed in the world at that time." In electrical theory, "after one hundred and fifty years the world is returning at the present moment to the amazing generalizations made by Franklin." D.

Franklin's Outline. Success of my Electrical Experiments. Medal sent me. Present Royal Society, and Speech of President.

In 1746, being at Boston, I met there with a Dr. Spence, who was lately arrived from Scotland, and showed me some electric experiments. They were imperfectly performed, as he was not very expert; but, being on a subject quite new to me, they equally surprised and pleased me. Soon after my return to Philadelphia, our library company received from Mr. P. Collinson, Fellow of the Royal Society of London, a present of a glass tube, with some account of the use of it in making such experiments. I eagerly seized the opportunity of repeating what I had seen at Boston; and, by much practice, acquired great readiness in performing those, also, which we had an account of from England, adding a number of new ones. I say much practice, for my house was continually full, for some time, with people who came to see these new wonders.

To divide a little this incumbrance among my friends, I caused a number of similar tubes to be blown at our glass-house, with which they furnished themselves, so

[1] From quotations given in Introduction, S. I. p. 96.

that we had at length several performers. Among these, the principal was Mr. Kinnersley, an ingenious neighbor, who, being out of business, I encouraged to undertake showing the experiments for money, and drew up for him two lectures, in which the experiments were ranged in such order, and accompanied with such explanations in such method, as that the foregoing should assist in comprehending the following. He procured an elegant apparatus for the purpose, in which all the little machines that I had roughly made for myself were nicely formed by instrument-makers. His lectures were well attended, and gave great satisfaction; and after some time he went through the colonies, exhibiting them in every capital town, and picked up some money. In the West India islands, indeed, it was with difficulty the experiments could be made, from the general moisture of the air.

Obliged as we were to Mr. Collinson for his present of the tube, etc., I thought it right he should be informed of our success in using it, and wrote him several letters containing accounts of our experiments. He got them read in the Royal Society, where they were not at first thought worth so much notice as to be printed in their Transactions. One paper, which I wrote for Mr. Kinnersley, on the sameness of lightning with electricity, I sent to Dr. Mitchel, an acquaintance of mine, and one of the members also of that society, who wrote me word that it had been read but was laughed at by the connoisseurs. The papers, however, being shown to Dr. Fothergill, he thought them of too much value to be stifled, and advised the printing of them. Mr. Collinson then gave them to

Cave for publication in his *Gentleman's Magazine;* but he chose to print them separately in a pamphlet, and Dr. Fothergill wrote the preface. Cave, it seems, judged rightly for his profit, for by the additions that arrived afterward, they swelled to a quarto volume, which has had five editions, and cost him nothing for copy-money.

It was, however, some time before those papers were much taken notice of in England. A copy of them happening to fall into the hands of the Count de Buffon, a philosopher deservedly of great reputation in France, and, indeed, all over Europe, he prevailed with M. Dalibard to translate them into French, and they were printed at Paris. The publication offended the Abbé Nollet, preceptor in Natural Philosophy to the royal family, and an able experimenter, who had formed and published a theory of electricity, which then had the general vogue. He could not at first believe that such a work came from America, and said it must have been fabricated by his enemies at Paris, to decry his system. Afterwards, having been assured that there really existed such a person as Franklin at Philadelphia, which he had doubted, he wrote and published a volume of Letters, chiefly addressed to me, defending his theory, and denying the verity of my experiments, and of the positions deduced from them.

I once purposed answering the abbé, and actually began the answer; but, on consideration that my writings contained a description of experiments which any one might repeat and verify, and if not to be verified, could not be defended; or of observations offered as conjectures, and not delivered dogmatically, therefore not laying me

under any obligation to defend them; and reflecting that a dispute between two persons, writing in different languages, might be lengthened greatly by mistranslations, and thence misconceptions of one another's meaning, much of one of the abbé's letters being founded on an error in the translation, I concluded to let my papers shift for themselves, believing it was better to spend what time I could spare from public business in making new experiments, than in disputing about those already made. I therefore never answered M. Nollet, and the event gave me no cause to repent my silence; for my friend M. le Roy, of the Royal Academy of Sciences, took up my cause and refuted him; my book was translated into the Italian, German, and Latin languages; and the doctrine it contained was by degrees universally adopted by the philosophers of Europe, in preference to that of the abbé; so that he lived to see himself the last of his sect, except Monsieur B——, of Paris, his *élève* and immediate disciple.

What gave my book the more sudden and general celebrity, was the success of one of its proposed experiments, made by Messrs. Dalibard and De Lor at Marly, for drawing lightning from the clouds. This engaged the public attention everywhere. M. de Lor, who had an apparatus for experimental philosophy, and lectured in that branch of science, undertook to repeat what he called the *Philadelphia Experiments;* and, after they were performed before the king and court, all the curious of Paris flocked to see them. I will not swell this narrative with an account of that capital experiment, nor of the infinite pleasure I received in the success of a similar

one I made soon after with a kite at Philadelphia, as both are to be found in the histories of electricity.

Dr. Wright, an English physician, when at Paris, wrote to a friend, who was of the Royal Society, an account of the high esteem my experiments were in among the learned abroad, and of their wonder that my writings had been so little noticed in England. The society, on this, resumed the consideration of the letters that had been read to them: and the celebrated Dr. Watson drew up a summary account of them, and of all I had afterwards sent to England on the subject, which he accompanied with some praise of the writer. This summary was then printed in their Transactions; and some members of the society in London, particularly the very ingenious Mr. Canton, having verified the experiment of procuring lightning from the clouds by a pointed rod, and acquainting them with the success, they soon made me more than amends for the slight with which they had before treated me. Without my having made any application for that honor, they chose me a member, and voted that I should be excused the customary payments, which would have amounted to twenty-five guineas;[1] and ever since have given me their Transactions gratis. They also presented me with the gold medal of Sir Godfrey Copley for the year 1753, the delivery of which was accompa-

[1] In a letter to his son in 1767, Franklin explained how the fees came to be remitted in his case. He had come upon the minutes of the society relating to it. "You must know," he writes, "it is not usual to admit persons that have not requested to be admitted; and a recommendatory certificate in favor of the candidate, signed by at least three of the members, is by our rule to be presented to the Society, expressing that he is desirous of that honor, and is so and so qualified, . . . I found . . . that the election was by a unanimous vote; and the honor being voluntarily conferred by the Society, unsolicited by me, it was thought wrong to demand or receive the usual fees." S. V. p. 77.

nied by a very handsome speech of the president, Lord Macclesfield, wherein I was highly honored.

Story of Franklin's Electrical Experiment.

(Continued by the Editor.)

Franklin's brief account of the beginning of his electrical experiments is a most inadequate statement of what really happened. The experiments witnessed in Boston, in 1746, and the possession of a Leyden jar, opened a new world to Franklin. He had now a competence and was soon to retire from business. The prospect of a new pursuit, more absorbing than any he had heretofore attempted, delighted him. He resolved for the future to devote his time and his means to scientific studies. So interested was he that he could not wait for the re-arrangement of his life and the change of residence necessary when he gave up business. He began at once to contrive experiments and soon set his friends upon the same. The result was that in less than two years, by means of his own observations and reflections, Franklin arrived at a better understanding of the nature and phenomena of electricity than any scientist of Europe possessed.

His first discovery was of the wonderful effect of points in drawing, or in giving off electricity. This suggested to him the use of lightning rods for the protection of tall buildings. The excitement of producing electrical phenomena in an age when nothing was known about this great force may be imagined. The least particular not observed before set Franklin's active mind on a new endeavor to find some explanation. It was a great piece of news his friend Collinson wrote him when he described the beautiful experiment in which he had made a wire "hot by the electric explosion and in that state fired gunpowder with it," because "it put it out of all question that heat is produced by our artificial electricity."

A paragraph from a letter to this same friend gives some idea of the enthusiasm these experiments and discoveries occasioned in Philadelphia. He writes, "As the vessel is just upon sailing, I cannot give you so large an account of American electricity as I intended; I shall only mention a few particulars more. We find granulated lead better to fill the bottle with than water, being easily warmed, and keeping warm and dry in damp air. We fire spirits with the wire of the phial. We light candles, just blown out, by drawing a spark among the smoke, between the wire and the snuffers. We represent lightning, by passing the wire in the dark, over a china plate, that has gilt flowers, or applying it to gilt frames of looking glasses, etc. We electrise a person twenty or more times running, with a touch of the finger on the wire, thus: He stands on the wax. Give him the electrised bottle in his hand. Touch the wire with your finger, and then touch his hand or face. There are sparks every time."

The explanation of this experiment is given by Franklin in a footnote so clear and well worded that it might be transferred without change to a modern text-book. — "By taking a spark from the wire, the electricity within the bottle is diminished; the outside of the bottle then draws some from the person holding it, and leaves him in the negative state. Then when his hand or face is touched an equal quantity is restored to him from the person touching." F.[1]

Very soon Franklin began to suspect "that the electrical fire was not created by friction, but collected, being really an element diffused among, and attracted by other matter, particularly by water and metals." This led him to make many more experiments by which, in a short time, he arrived at a new theory of electricity: he and his friends began to use the terms *positive* and *negative*, now become so familiar, in the same meaning

[1] S. II. p. 308.

that we give them. The determination of this property of the "electrical fluid," as electricity was then called, was a very great discovery for a self-educated man, still engaged in business, to arrive at. It is sometimes said that Sir William Watson announced the theory of positive and negative electricity at an earlier date than Franklin, but Franklin's letters indicate that he came upon the idea independently, before it appeared in any reports of experiments that reached this country, and his name is more often connected with the discovery than Watson's; he elaborated it, and wrote explanations of his theory and of the experiments on which he rested his belief, with such clearness and particularity that the account was reprinted and read everywhere, and, the experiments being repeated and proving successful, won for him great reputation, especially in France. This, then, was the second important discovery made by Franklin in less than two years from the beginning of his electrical studies.

By this time, Franklin had begun to think that the lightning in the clouds must be a form of electricity. He first devised an experiment which showed, on a small scale, a relation similar to the one in nature when a thunder cloud charged with electric fluid hangs over the earth. His own description of this experiment, written in clear and simple language, is given here:

"Take a pair of large brass scales, of two or more feet beam, the cords of the scales being silk. Suspend the beam by a pack-thread from the ceiling, so that the bottom of the scales may be about a foot from the floor: The scales will move round in a circle by the untwisting of the pack-thread. Set the iron punch on the end upon the floor, in such a place as that the scales may pass over it in making their circle: Then electrify one scale, by applying the wire of a charged phial to it. As they move round, you see that scale draw nigher to the floor, and dip more when it comes over the punch; and if that be placed

at a proper distance, the scale will snap and discharge its fire into it. But, if a needle be stuck on the end of the punch, its point upward, the scale, instead of drawing nigh to the punch, and snapping, discharges its fire silently through the point, and rises higher from the punch. Nay, even if the needle be placed upon the floor near the punch, its point upwards, the end of the punch, though so much higher than the needle, will not attract the scale and receive its fire, for the needle will get it and convey it away, before it comes nigh enough for the punch to act.[1]

"Now if the fire of electricity and that of lightning be the same, as I have endeavored to show at large, in a former paper, . . . the horizontal motion of the scales over the floor may represent the motion of the clouds over the earth; and the erect iron punch, a hill or high building; and then we see how electrified clouds passing over hills or high buildings at too great a height to strike, may be attracted lower till within their striking distance. And lastly, if a needle fixed on the punch with its point upright, or even on the floor below the punch, will draw the fire from the scale silently at a much greater than the striking distance, and so prevent its descending towards the punch; or if in its course it would have come nigh enough to strike, yet being first deprived of its fire it cannot, and the punch is thereby secured from the stroke; I say, if these things are so, may not the knowledge of this power of points be of use to mankind, in preserving houses, churches, ships, &c. from the stroke of lightning, by directing us to fix on the highest parts of those edifices, upright rods of iron made sharp as a needle, and gilt to prevent rusting, and from the foot of those rods a wire down the outside of the building into the ground, or down round one of the shrouds of a ship, and down her side until it reaches the water? Would not these pointed rods probably

[1] S. II. p. 436.

draw the electrical fire silently out of the cloud before it came nigh enough to strike, and thereby secure us from that most sudden and terrible mischief?"

Franklin next suggested a method of bringing electricity from the clouds in proof of this theory, by placing a man with an electrical stand in a high belfry and extending upwards from the apparatus, for twenty or thirty feet, a pointed rod which should bring down the electricity. The possibility of danger in this experiment occurred to Franklin and he suggested that the operator might arrange a small wire connected with the leads of the roof, and having an insulated handle which he could use for his own protection in case he got from the clouds more electric fluid than he wished. Letters and articles explaining these experiments were translated into French and soon electric rods sixty and ninty-nine feet high were raised in the neighborhood of Paris by enthusiastic, scientific men. Brilliant sparks were drawn from these rods. The Philadelphia experiments, as they were called, were performed in the presence of the King at St. Germain. From this, the experiments spread over Europe, but not always with such happy results. In St. Petersburg, Professor Richman erected a rod from the top of his house. It happened on an August day that he went to the roof with a friend to watch the approach of a storm. Suddenly, a heavy clap of thunder burst over their heads; the professor bent to observe his instrument, his head only about a foot from the iron rod. Instantly, a ball about the size of a doubled fist appeared to shoot from the rod to the professor's head; there was, at the same time, a sharp report, and his friend saw Richman sink back; in a few moments he expired.

To us, who know the terrible power of an electric bolt, the wonder is that Franklin himself did not fall a victim to his own experiments. In fact, he twice received a shock that

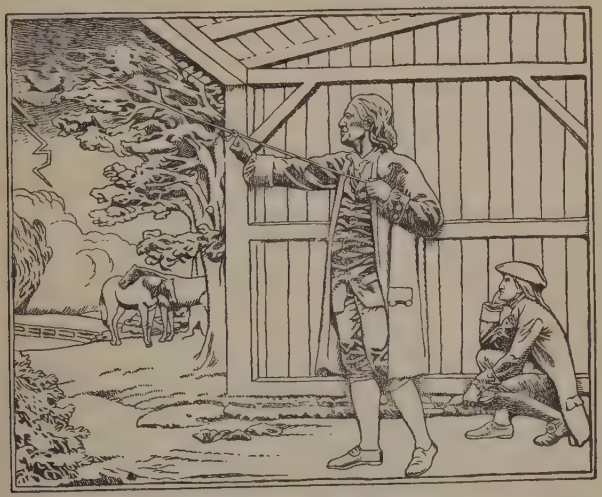
rendered him insensible. He was once experimenting to find the amount of electricity required to kill a turkey; he "found that two large thin glass jars, gilt, holding each about six gallons, . . . were sufficient to kill common hens outright; but the turkey, though thrown into violent convulsions, and then lying as dead for some minutes, would recover in less than a quarter of an hour. However, having added three other such to the former two, though not fully charged, he killed a turkey of about ten pounds weight." [1] It was in making these experiments that the accident to himself occurred, of which he wrote to a friend in Boston, December 25, 1750.

"I have lately made an experiment in electricity, that I desire never to repeat. Two nights ago, being about to kill a turkey by the shock from two large glass jars, containing as much electrical fire as forty common phials, I inadvertently took the whole through my own arms and body, by receiving the fire from the united top wires with one hand, while the other held a chain connected with the outsides of both jars. The company present (whose talking to me, and to one another, I suppose occasioned my inattention to what I was about) say, that the flash was very great, and the crack as loud as a pistol; yet, my senses being instantly gone, I neither saw the one nor heard the other; nor did I feel the stroke on my hand, though I afterwards found it raised a round swelling where the fire entered, as big as half a pistol-bullet; by which you may judge of the quickness of the electrical fire, which by this instance seems to be greater than that of sound, light, or animal sensation.

"What I can remember about the matter is that I was about to try whether the bottles or jars were fully charged, by the strength and length of the stream issuing to my hand, as

[1] Quoted from Dr. Watson's account of Franklin's experiments, read before the Royal Society, S. I. p. 109.

I commonly used to do, and which I might safely enough have done if I had not held the chain in the other hand. I then felt what I know not how well to describe; a universal blow throughout my whole body from head to foot, which seemed within as well as without; after which the first thing I took notice of was a violent quick shaking of my body, which



FRANKLIN AND THE KITE

After a bronze tablet on the pedestal of the Greenough statue

gradually remitting, my sense as gradually returned, and then I thought the bottles must be discharged, but could not conceive how, till at last I perceived the chain in my hand, and recollected what I had been about to do. That part of my hand and fingers, which held the chain, was left white, as though the blood had been driven out, and remained so eight or ten minutes after, feeling like dead flesh; and I had a numbness in my arms and the back of my neck, which con-

tinued till the next morning, but wore off. Nothing remains now of this shock, but a soreness in my breast-bone, which feels as if it had been bruised. I did not fall, but suppose I should have been knocked down if I had received the stroke in my head. The whole was over in less than a minute."

This caused Franklin to realize the danger to the operator of electrical experiments and he was much distressed when he learned that Professor Richman had come to his death by repeating experiments he had suggested.

The second stroke received by Franklin came about in this way. It became the fashion to expect that electricity would prove the long-hoped-for cure for many diseases hitherto beyond the physician's skill. The most learned doctors of Europe corresponded with Franklin on this subject and he treated with electricity from his batteries paralytic, or epileptic patients who came to him for this service. He had, one day, a paralytic patient brought by friends. He formed a circle of persons joining hands, intending to send the electricity through all. In arranging the circle, he inadvertently took his own place under an iron hook depending from the ceiling to within two inches of the top of his head. A wire connected this hook with the outside of the jars. He writes, "I attempted to discharge them (the jars), and in fact did so; but I did not perceive it, tho' the charge went through me and not through the Persons I intended it for. I neither saw the Flash, heard the Report, nor felt the Stroke. When my senses returned I found myself on the Floor. I got up not knowing how that had happened. I then again attempted to discharge the jars, but one of the company told me they were already discharged, which I could not at first believe, but on Trial found it true. They told me they had not felt it, but they saw I was knocked down by it, which had greatly surprised them. On recollecting myself and examining my Situation, I found the Case

clear. A small swelling rose on the top of my head, which continued sore for some days; but I do not remember any other effect good or bad." [1]

The "Philadelphia experiments" as tried in France were reported in England and, soon after, tried there. The curious thing is that Franklin had written about his experiments first, to friends in England, but the account having come from the provinces was not thought worthy of serious attention, until now when Franklin's name had become famous on the continent, his experiments were taken up by members of the Royal Society, London. They were successful there, as elsewhere, and soon an account of them was read before the Society and afterwards printed. Then, the American philosopher came into the honor that was his due. Meantime, in Philadelphia, Franklin and his son had performed the famous kite experiment, the description of which may be found in his writings.[2]

The First Lightning Rod.

The idea of using a pointed rod to protect buildings from lightning had come to Franklin's mind almost as soon as he had proved that points will receive and convey the electric fluid silently and safely. He often referred to this idea and, at length, in 1753, he made a formal statement of this method of protecting tall buildings, ships, etc., and discussed the particulars of arrangement. The lightning rod came into use first in America where the danger of bolts from the clouds is much greater than in Europe. Strange prejudices sometimes prevented the use of this means of safety. A pastor in Moravia who had erected a rod was obliged to remove it because the peasants believed that it had caused the extreme drouth of that season. Robespierre, he who later became infamous and thus

[1] From a letter to Jan Ingenhousz, written in 1785. S. IX. 308.

[2] S. III. p. 99.

known to all the world, had for his first case the defense of a client whose neighbors were alarmed by the lightning conductor he had erected on his property. The young lawyer afterwards sent a copy of his argument to Franklin, naming him "the most illustrious savant in the world."

For a time, few conductors were erected in England, but, at length, while Franklin was himself resident in that country, an incident occurred which called attention to this invention. A powder magazine in Italy was exploded by a stroke of lightning. This alarmed the British Board of Ordnance and they consulted Franklin in regard to the protection of their magazines. Franklin made an examination of the buildings and situation, after which he submitted a report containing his recommendation. In the powder magazine he found an arrangement which even a boy, to-day, would understand the danger of; the roof was capped from end to end with a coping of lead twenty-two inches wide. The barrels containing the powder were piled one above another, often as high as the spring of the arches; each barrel had four copper hoops and down the arches to the place where the powder was stored passed a number of perpendicular iron rods. This arrangement formed, with the hoops, a broken conductor, which, as Franklin pointed out, is, in a powder magazine, the most dangerous of all. In the twentieth century such an arrangement would seem expressly designed to tempt the bolts of heaven.

Franklin's report was referred to the Royal Society which concurred in the recommendation. One member, however, dissented from a part of the report. To his mind the use of pointed rods would invite the lightning and bring down a greater amount than if blunt rods were used. This gave rise to many amusing incidents, for the dissenting gentleman was not friendly to the American colonies and when war broke out the question of blunt rods or pointed ones got into politics.

Benj. Franklin

George the Third ordered the pointed rods pulled down from Kew palace. The queen's physician, Sir John Pringle, was Franklin's friend, and a good scientist besides; when appealed to by the King, in the dispute, he replied, "The laws of nature are not changeable at royal pleasure." For this offense, he was deprived of his position at court and obliged to resign the presidency of the Royal Society.

The matter of the pointed rods was an excellent subject for the making of epigrams and it soon became fashionable to turn one in which figured the King, the American, and the points.

This is one of the best:

"While you, great George, for knowledge hunt
And sharp conductors change for blunt
The Empire 's out of joint.
Franklin another course pursues
And all your thunder heedless views
By keeping to the point."[1]

[1] Introduction, S. I. 108.

XII. Colonial Agent

1756–1762

Comment. When Franklin sailed for England, in 1757, he entered upon that long career of public service which was so essential to the birth of a new nation in America. From this time on, his life mingles in events with which every school boy or girl is familiar, and the account he writes is really contemporary history. As such, it should be read, but the historical narrative of the same period must not be neglected. Franklin's views, however just, are personal and contemporary. In the century and more, since he wrote, many secret records have come to light. Historians have been diligent in searching out and comparing letters, documents, official reports, on both sides of the ocean, and the story of the eighteenth century as told in recent histories is fuller, more complete, fairer, than any account before written. These histories which give such vivid, well-proportioned narratives of the past are based in considerable part upon accounts written at the time by men who took part in the events. The formal history furnishes the background for the lives of individuals, but it is through the latter that we come to realize what it would have been to live in those early days and share in the struggle the benefits of which we reap. Further, these contemporary stories of the fortunes of individuals give us an understanding of the personal character and human nature of the men who wrote them which it is impossible to gain from a strictly historical narrative.

Such an account of the events of the years 1757–8 as the one written by Franklin should be read first of all from the personal point of view; it is simply a narrative, in the first person, of how the agent of the Colony of Pennsylvania, Benjamin Franklin by name, discharged the commission on which

he was sent to England. This story of the mission on which he went is properly of central importance, but in it mingles the personal interests and points of view of the individual who necessarily sympathized with the colonists whom he represented. And just here, at the beginning of the years in which the story of his life was also the story of the life of the American people, the narrative of Franklin ceases abruptly. We must forever regret that all who come after him thus lost the personal account of those affairs of which he was so great a part. D.

Franklin's Outline. Denny's Arrival and Courtship to me. His character. My service to the Army in the affair of Quarters. Disputes about the Proprietor's Taxes continued. Project for paving the City. I am sent to England.

Our new governor, Captain Denny, brought over for me the before-mentioned medal from the Royal Society, which he presented to me at an entertainment given him by the city. He accompanied it with very polite expressions of his esteem for me, having, as he said, been long acquainted with my character. After dinner, when the company, as was customary at that time, were engaged in drinking, he took me aside into another room, and acquainted me that he had been advised by his friends in England to cultivate a friendship with me, as one who was capable of giving him the best advice, and of contributing most effectually to the making his administration easy; that he therefore desired of all things to have a good understanding with me, and he begged me to be assured of his readiness on all occasions to render me every service that might be in his power. He said much to me, also, of the proprietor's good disposition towards

the province, and of the advantage it might be to us all, and to me in particular, if the opposition that had been so long continued to his measures was dropped, and harmony restored between him and the people; in effecting which, it was thought no one could be more serviceable than myself; and I might depend on adequate acknowledgments and recompenses, etc., etc. The drinkers, finding that we did not return immediately to the table, sent us a decanter of Madeira, which the governor made liberal use of, and in proportion became more profuse of his solicitations and promises.

My answers were to this purpose: that my circumstances, thanks to God, were such as to make proprietary favors unnecessary to me; and that, being a member of the Assembly, I could not possibly accept of any; that, however, I had no personal enmity to the proprietary, and that, whenever the public measures he proposed should appear to be for the good of the people, no one should espouse and forward them more zealously than myself; my past opposition having been founded on this, that the measures which had been urged were evidently intended to serve the proprietary interest, with great prejudice to that of the people; that I was much obliged to him (the governor) for his professions of regard to me, and that he might rely on everything in my power to make his administration as easy as possible, hoping at the same time that he had not brought with him the same unfortunate instruction his predecessor had been hampered with.

On this he did not then explain himself; but when he afterwards came to do business with the Assembly, they

appeared again, the disputes were renewed, and I was as active as ever in the opposition, being the penman, first, of the request to have a communication of the instructions, and then of the remarks upon them, which may be found in the votes of the time, and in the Historical Review I afterwards published. But between us personally no enmity arose; we were often together; he was a man of letters, had seen much of the world, and was very entertaining and pleasing in conversation. He gave me the first information that my old friend Jas. Ralph was still alive; that he was esteemed one of the best political writers in England; had been employed in the dispute between Prince Frederic and the king, and had obtained a pension of three hundred a year; that his reputation was indeed small as a poet, Pope having damned his poetry in the *Dunciad;* but his prose was thought as good as any man's.

The Assembly finally finding the proprietary obstinately persisted in manacling their deputies with instructions inconsistent not only with the privileges of the people, but with the service of the crown, resolved to petition the king against them, and appointed me their agent to go over to England, to present and support the petition. The House had sent up a bill to the governor, granting a sum of sixty thousand pounds for the king's use (ten thousand pounds of which was subjected to the orders of the then general, Lord Loudoun), which the governor absolutely refused to pass, in compliance with his instructions.

I had agreed with Captain Morris, of the packet at New York, for my passage, and my stores were put on

board, when Lord Loudoun arrived at Philadelphia, expressly, as he told me, to endeavor an accommodation between the governor and Assembly, that his majesty's service might not be obstructed by their dissensions. Accordingly, he desired the governor and myself to meet him, that he might hear what was to be said on both sides. We met and discussed the business. In behalf of the Assembly, I urged all the various arguments that may be found in the public papers of that time, which were of my writing, and are printed with the minutes of the Assembly; and the governor pleaded his instructions; the bond he had given to observe them, and his ruin if he disobeyed, yet seemed not unwilling to hazard himself if Lord Loudoun would advise it. This his lordship did not choose to do, though I once thought I had nearly prevailed with him to do it; but finally he rather chose to urge the compliance of the Assembly; and he entreated me to use my endeavors with them for that purpose, declaring that he would spare none of the king's troops for the defence of our frontiers, and that, if we did not continue to provide for that defence ourselves, they must remain exposed to the enemy.

I acquainted the House with what had passed, and, presenting them with a set of resolutions I had drawn up, declaring our rights, and that we did not relinquish our claim to those rights, but only suspended the exercise of them on this occasion through *force*, against which we protested, they at length agreed to drop that bill, and frame another conformable to the proprietary instructions. This of course the governor passed, and I was then at liberty to proceed on my voyage. But, in the mean

time, the packet had sailed with my sea-stores, which was some loss to me, and my only recompense was his lordship's thanks for my service, all the credit of obtaining the accommodation falling to his share.

He set out for New York before me; and, as the time for dispatching the packet-boats was at his disposition, and there were two then remaining there, one of which, he said, was to sail very soon, I requested to know the precise time, that I might not miss her by any delay of mine. His answer was, "I have given out that she is to sail on Saturday next; but I may let you know, *entre nous*, that if you are there by Monday morning, you will be in time, but do not delay longer." By some accidental hindrance at a ferry, it was Monday noon before I arrived, and I was much afraid she might have sailed, as the wind was fair; but I was soon made easy by the information that she was still in the harbor and would not move till the next day. One would imagine that I was now on the very point of departing for Europe. I thought so; but I was not then so well acquainted with his lordship's character, of which *indecision* was one of the strongest features. I shall give some instances. It was about the beginning of April that I came to New York, and I think it was near the end of June before we sailed. There were then two of the packet-boats which had been long in port, but were detained for the general's letters, which were always to be ready to-morrow. Another packet arrived; she too was detained; and before we sailed, a fourth was expected. Ours was the first to be dispatched, as having been there longest. Passengers were engaged in all, and some extremely impatient to be gone, and the

merchants uneasy about their letters and the orders they had given for insurance (it being war time) for fall goods; but their anxiety availed nothing; his lordship's letters were not ready; and yet whoever waited on him found him always at his desk, pen in hand, and concluded he must needs write abundantly.

Going myself one morning to pay my respects, I found in his antechamber one Innis, a messenger of Philadelphia, who had come from thence express with a packet from Governor Denny for the General. He delivered to me some letters from my friends there, which occasioned my inquiring when he was to return, and where he lodged, that I might send some letters by him. He told me he was ordered to call to-morrow at nine for the general's answer to the governor, and should set off immediately. I put my letters into his hands the same day. A fortnight after I met him again in the same place. "So, you are soon returned, Innis?" "*Returned!* no, I am not *gone* yet." "How so?" "I have called here by order every morning these two weeks past for his lordship's letter, and it is not yet ready." "Is it possible, when he is so great a writer? for I see him constantly at his escritoire." "Yes," says Innis, "but he is like St. George on the signs, *always on horseback, and never rides on.*" This observation of the messenger was, it seems, well founded; for, when in England, I understood, that Mr. Pitt gave it as one reason for removing this general, and sending Generals Amherst and Wolfe, *that the minister never heard from him, and could not know what he was doing.*

This daily expectation of sailing, and all the three packets going down to Sandy Hook, to join the fleet

there, the passengers thought it best to be on board, lest by a sudden order the ships should sail, and they be left behind. There, if I remember right, we were about six weeks, consuming our sea-stores, and obliged to procure more. At length the fleet sailed, the General and all his army on board, bound to Louisburg with intent to besiege and take that fortress; all the packet-boats in company ordered to attend the General's ship, ready to receive his dispatches when they should be ready. We were out five days before we got a letter with leave to part, and then our ship quitted the fleet and steered for England. The other two packets he still detained, carried them with him to Halifax, where he stayed some time to exercise the men in sham attacks upon sham forts, then altered his mind as to besieging Louisburg, and returned to New York, with all his troops, together with the two packets above mentioned, and all their passengers. During his absence the French and savages had taken Fort George, on the frontier of that province, and the savages had massacred many of the garrison after capitulation.

I saw afterwards in London Captain Bonnell, who commanded one of those packets. He told me that, when he had been detained a month, he acquainted his lordship that his ship had grown foul, to a degree that must necessarily hinder her fast sailing, a point of consequence for a packet-boat, and requested an allowance of time to heave her down and clean her bottom. He was asked how long time that would require. He answered, three days. The general replied, "If you can do it in one day, I give you leave: otherwise not; for you must certainly sail the

day after to-morrow." So he never obtained leave, though detained afterwards from day to day during full three months.

I saw also in London one of Bonnell's passengers, who was so enraged against his lordship for deceiving and detaining him so long at New York, and then carrying him to Halifax and back again, that he swore he would sue him for damages. Whether he did or not, I never heard; but, as he represented the injury to his affairs, it was very considerable.

On the whole, I wondered much how such a man came to be intrusted with so important a business as the conduct of a great army; but, having since seen more of the great world, and the means of obtaining, and motives for giving places, my wonder is diminished. General Shirley, on whom the command of the army developed upon the death of Braddock, would, in my opinion, if continued in place, have made a much better campaign than that of Loudoun in 1757, which was frivolous, expensive, and disgraceful to our nation beyond conception; for, though Shirley was not a bred soldier, he was sensible and sagacious in himself, and attentive to good advice from others, capable of forming judicious plans, and quick and active in carrying them into execution. Loudoun, instead of defending the colonies with his great army, left them totally exposed, while he paraded idly at Halifax, by which means Fort George was lost; besides, he deranged all our mercantile operations, and distressed our trade, by a long embargo on the exportation of provisions, on pretence of keeping supplies from being obtained by the enemy, but in reality for beating down their price in favor

of the contractors, in whose profits, it was said, perhaps from suspicion only, he had a share. And, when at length the embargo was taken off, by neglecting to send notice of it to Charleston, the Carolina fleet was detained near three months longer, whereby their bottoms were so much damaged by the worm that a great part of them foundered in their passage home.

Shirley was, I believe, sincerely glad of being relieved from so burdensome a charge as the conduct of an army must be to a man unacquainted with military business. I was at the entertainment given by the city of New York to Lord Loudoun, on his taking upon him the command. Shirley, though thereby superseded, was present also. There was a great company of officers, citizens, and strangers, and, some chairs having been borrowed in the neighborhood, there was one among them very low, which fell to the lot of Mr. Shirley. Perceiving it as I sat by him, I said, "They have given you, sir, too low a seat." "No matter," says he, "Mr. Franklin, I find *a low seat* the easiest."

While I was, as afore mentioned, detained at New York, I received all the accounts of the provisions, etc., that I had furnished to Braddock, some of which accounts could not sooner be obtained from the different persons I had employed to assist in the business. I presented them to Lord Loudoun, desiring to be paid the balance. He caused them to be regularly examined by the proper officer, who, after comparing every article with its voucher, certified them to be right; and the balance due for which his lordship promised to give me an order on the paymaster. This was, however, put off from time to time; and,

though I called often for it by appointment, I did not get it. At length, just before my departure, he told me he had, on better consideration, concluded not to mix his accounts with those of his predecessors. "And you," says he, "when in England, have only to exhibit your accounts at the treasury, and you will be paid immediately."

I mentioned, but without effect, the great and unexpected expense I had been put to by being detained so long at New York, as a reason for my desiring to be presently paid; and on my observing that it was not right I should be put to any further trouble or delay in obtaining the money I had advanced, as I charged no commission for my service, "O, sir," says he, "you must not think of persuading us that you are no gainer; we understand better those affairs, and know that everyone concerned in supplying the army finds means, in the doing it, to fill his own pockets." I assured him that was not my case, and that I had not pocketed a farthing; but he appeared clearly not to believe me; and, indeed, I have since learnt that immense fortunes are often made in such employments. As to my balance, I am not paid it to this day, of which more hereafter.

Our captain of the packet had boasted much, before we sailed, of the swiftness of his ship; unfortunately, when we came to sea, she proved the dullest of ninety-six sail, to his no small mortification. After many conjectures respecting the cause, when we were near another ship almost as dull as ours, which, however, gained upon us, the captain ordered all hands to come aft, and stand as near the ensign staff as possible. We were, passengers included, about forty persons. While we stood there, the

ship mended her pace, and soon left her neighbor far behind, which proved clearly what our captain suspected, that she was loaded too much by the head. The casks of water, it seems, had been all placed forward; these he therefore ordered to be moved further aft, on which the ship recovered her character, and proved the best sailer in the fleet.

The captain said she had once gone at the rate of thirteen knots, which is accounted thirteen miles per hour. We had on board, as a passenger, Captain Kennedy, of the Navy, who contended that it was impossible, and that no ship ever sailed so fast, and that there must have been some error in the division of the log-line, or some mistake in heaving the log. A wager ensued between the two captains, to be decided when there should be sufficient wind. Kennedy thereupon examined rigorously the log-line, and, being satisfied with that, he determined to throw the log himself. Accordingly some days after, when the wind blew very fair and fresh, and the captain of the packet, Lutwidge, said he believed she then went at the rate of thirteen knots, Kennedy made the experiment, and owned his wager lost.

The above fact I give for the sake of the following observation. It has been remarked, as an imperfection in the art of ship-building, that it can never be known, till she is tried, whether a new ship will or will not be a good sailer; for that the model of a good-sailing ship has been exactly followed in a new one, which has proved, on the contrary, remarkably dull. I apprehend that this may partly be occasioned by the different opinions of seamen respecting the modes of lading, rigging, and sailing of a

ship; each has his system; and the same vessel, laden by the judgment and orders of one captain, shall sail better or worse than when by the orders of another. Besides, it scarce ever happens that a ship is formed, fitted for the the sea, and sailed by the same person. One man builds the hull, another rigs her, a third lades and sails her. No one of these has the advantage of knowing all the ideas and experience of the others, and, therefore, cannot draw just conclusions from a combination of the whole.

Even in the simple operation of sailing when at sea, I have often observed different judgments in the officers who commanded the successive watches, the wind being the same. One would have the sails trimmed sharper or flatter than another, so that they seemed to have no certain rule to govern by. Yet I think a set of experiments might be instituted, first, to determine the most proper form of the hull for swift sailing; next, the best dimensions and properest place for the masts; then the form and quantity of sails, and their position, as the wind may be; and, lastly, the disposition of the lading. This is an age of experiments, and I think a set accurately made and combined would be of great use. I am persuaded, therefore, that ere long some ingenious philosopher will undertake it, to whom I wish success.

We were several times chased in our passage, but outsailed everything, and in thirty days had soundings. We had a good observation, and the captain judged himself so near our port, Falmouth, that, if we made a good run in the night, we might be off the mouth of that harbor in the morning, and by running in the night might escape the notice of the enemy's privateers, who often cruised

near the entrance of the channel. Accordingly, all the sail was set that we could possibly make, and the wind being very fresh and fair, we went right before it, and made great way. The captain, after his observation, shaped his course, as he thought, so as to pass wide of the Scilly Isles; but it seems there is sometimes a strong indraught setting up St. George's Channel, which deceives seamen and caused the loss of Sir Cloudesley Shovel's squadron. This indraught was probably the cause of what happened to us.

We had a watchman placed in the bow, to whom they often called, "*Look well out before there*," and he as often answered, "*Ay, ay;*" but perhaps had his eyes shut, and was half asleep at the time, they sometimes answering, as is said, mechanically; for he did not see a light just before us, which had been hid by the studding-sails from the man at the helm, and from the rest of the watch, but by an accidental yaw of the ship was discovered, and occasioned a great alarm, we being very near it, the light appearing to me as big as a cart-wheel. It was midnight, and our captain fast asleep; but Captain Kennedy, jumping upon deck, and seeing the danger, ordered the ship to wear round, all sails standing; an operation dangerous to the masts, but it carried us clear, and we escaped shipwreck, for we were running right upon the rocks on which the lighthouse was erected. This deliverance impressed me strongly with the utility of lighthouses, and made me resolve to encourage the building more of them in America, if I should live to return there.

In the morning it was found by the soundings, etc.,

that we were near our port, but a thick fog hid the land from our sight. About nine o'clock the fog began to rise, and seemed to be lifted up from the water like the curtain at a play-house, discovering underneath, the town of Falmouth, the vessels in its harbor, and the fields that surrounded it. This was a most pleasing spectacle to those who had been so long without any other prospects than the uniform view of a vacant ocean, and it gave us the more pleasure as we were now free from the anxieties which the state of war occasioned.

I set out immediately, with my son, for London, and we only stopped a little by the way to view Stonehenge on Salisbury Plain, and Lord Pembroke's house and gardens, with his very curious antiquities at Wilton. We arrived in London the 27th of July, 1757.

[The part of the autobiography which follows was written in the last year of Franklin's life, in Philadelphia. Many references in letters written during his stay in France attest his purpose of completing his memoirs, but he found great obstacles in the way. In France, he was too busy to find time for such recreation, and after he reached home, honors and new responsibilities crowded upon him. His growing infirmity from disease also made writing a painful task, but he at length discovered that he could write by dictation and resolved to complete his memoirs in this way. He was much embarrassed in this attempt by the loss of many valuable papers which had been intrusted to a friend, in 1776, when Franklin went to France. In the disorders of the occupation of Philadelphia by the British, the trunk containing these papers was burst open and many of them were scattered and destroyed. D.]

As soon as I was settled in a lodging Mr. Charles had provided for me, I went to visit Dr. Fothergill, to whom

I was strongly recommended, and whose counsel respecting my proceedings I was advised to obtain. He was against an immediate complaint to government, and thought the proprietaries should first be personally applied to, who might possibly be induced by the interposition and persuasion of some private friends, to accommodate matters amicably. I then waited on my old friend and correspondent, Mr. Peter Collinson, who told me that John Hanbury, the great Virginian merchant, had requested to be informed when I should arrive, that he might carry me to Lord Granville's, who was then President of the Council and wished to see me as soon as possible. I agreed to go with him the next morning. Accordingly Mr. Hanbury called for me and took me in his carriage to that nobleman's, who received me with great civility; and after some questions respecting the present state of affairs in America and discourse thereupon, he said to me: "You Americans have wrong ideas of the nature of your constitution, you contend that the king's instructions to his governors are not laws, and think yourselves at liberty to regard or disregard them at your own discretion. But those instructions are not like the pocket instructions given to a minister going abroad, for regulating his conduct in some trifling point of ceremony. They are first drawn up by judges learned in the laws; they are then considered, debated, and perhaps amended in Council, after which they are signed by the king. They are then, so far as they relate to you, the *law of the land*, for the king is the LEGISLATOR OF THE COLONIES." I told his lordship this was new doctrine to me. I had always understood from our charters that our

laws were to be made by our Assemblies, to be presented indeed to the king for his royal assent, but that being once given the king could not repeal or alter them. And as the Assemblies could not make permanent laws without his assent, so neither could he make a law for them without theirs. He assured me I was totally mistaken. I did not think so, however, and his lordship's conversation having a little alarmed me as to what might be the sentiments of the court concerning us, I wrote it down as soon as I returned to my lodgings. I recollected that about twenty years before, a clause in a bill brought into Parliament by the ministry had proposed to make the king's instructions laws in the colonies, but the clause was thrown out by the Commons, for which we adored them as our friends and friends of liberty, till by their conduct towards us in 1765 it seemed that they had refused that point of sovereignty to the king only that they might reserve it for themselves.

After some days, Dr. Fothergill having spoken to the proprietaries, they agreed to a meeting with me at Mr. T. Penn's house in Spring Garden. The conversation at first consisted of mutual declarations of disposition to reasonable accommodations, but I suppose each party had its own ideas of what should be meant by *reasonable*. We then went into consideration of our several points of complaint, which I enumerated. The proprietaries justified their conduct as well as they could, and I the Assembly's. We now appeared very wide, and so far from each other in our opinions as to discourage all hope of agreement. However, it was concluded that I should give them the heads of our complaints in writing, and

they promised then to consider them. I did so soon after, but they put the paper into the hands of their solicitor, Ferdinand John Paris, who managed for them all their law business in their great suit with the neighboring proprietary of Maryland, Lord Baltimore, which had subsisted seventy years, and wrote for them all their papers and messages in their dispute with the Assembly. He was a proud, angry man, and as I had occasionally in the answers of the Assembly treated his papers with some severity, they being really weak in point of argument and haughty in expression, he had conceived a mortal enmity to me, which discovering itself whenever we met, I declined the proprietary's proposal that he and I should discuss the heads of complaint between our two selves and refused treating with any one but them. They then by his advice put the paper into the hands of the Attorney and Solicitor-General for their opinion and counsel upon it, where it lay unanswered a year wanting eight days, during which time I made frequent demands of an answer from the proprietaries, but without obtaining any other than that they had not yet received the opinion of the Attorney and the Solicitor-General. What it was when they did receive it I never learnt, for they did not communicate it to me, but sent a long message to the Assembly drawn and signed by Paris, reciting my paper, complaining of its want of formality, as a rudeness on my part, and giving a flimsy justification of their conduct, adding that they should be willing to accommodate matters if the Assembly would send out *some person of candor* to treat with them for that purpose, intimating thereby that I was not such.

The want of formality or rudeness was, probably, my not having addressed the paper to them with their assumed titles of True and Absolute Proprietaries of the Province of Pennsylvania, which I omitted as not thinking it necessary in a paper, the intention of which was only to reduce to a certainty by writing, what in conversation I had delivered *viva voce*.

But during this delay, the Assembly having prevailed with Governor Denny to pass an act taxing the proprietary estate in common with the estates of the people, which was the grand point in dispute, they omitted answering the message.

When this act however came over, the proprietaries, counselled by Paris, determined to oppose its receiving the royal assent. Accordingly they petitioned the king in Council, and a hearing was appointed in which two lawyers were employed by them against the act, and two by me in support of it. They alleged that the act was intended to load the proprietary estate in order to spare those of the people, and that if it were suffered to continue in force, and the proprietaries, who were in odium with the people, left to their mercy in proportioning the taxes, they would inevitably be ruined. We replied that the act had no such intention, and would have no such effect. That the assessors were honest and discreet men under an oath to assess fairly and equitably, and that any advantage each of them might expect in lessening his own tax by augmenting that of the proprietaries was too trifling to induce them to perjure themselves. This is the purport of what I remember as urged by both sides, except that we insisted strongly on the mischievous

consequences that must attend a repeal, for that the money, £100,000, being printed [1] and given to the king's use, expended in his service, and now spread among the people, the repeal would strike it dead in their hands to the ruin of many, and the total discouragement of future grants, and the selfishness of the proprietors in soliciting such a general catastrophe, merely from a groundless fear of their estate being taxed too highly, was insisted on in the strongest terms. On this, Lord Mansfield, one of the counsel, rose, and beckoning me took me into the clerk's chamber, while the lawyers were pleading, and asked me if I was really of opinion that no injury would be done the proprietary estate in the execution of the act. I said, certainly. "Then," says he, "you can have little objection to enter into an engagement to assure that point." I answered, "None at all." He then called in Paris, and after some discourse, his lordship's proposition was accepted on both sides; a paper to the purpose was drawn up by the Clerk of the Council, which I signed with Mr. Charles, who was also an Agent of the Province for their ordinary affairs, when Lord Mansfield returned to the Council Chamber, where finally the law was allowed to pass. Some changes were however recommended, and we also engaged they should be made by a subsequent law, but the Assembly did not think them necessary; for one year's tax having been levied by the act before the order of Council arrived, they appointed a committee to examine the proceedings of the assessors, and on this committee they put several particular friends of the proprietaries. After a full enquiry, they unani-

[1] The hundred thousand pounds was paper money, not coin.

mously signed a report that they found the tax had been assessed with perfect equity.

The Assembly looked into my entering into the first part of the engagement as an essential service to the Province, since it secured the credit of the paper money then spread over all the country. They gave me their thanks in form when I returned. But the proprietaries were enraged at Governor Denny for having passed the act, and turned him out with threats of suing him for breach of instructions which he had given bond to observe. He, however, having done it at the instance of the General, and for His Majesty's service, and having some powerful interest at court, despised the threats and they were never put in execution. . . . [Unfinished.]

Franklin's Outline for the Remainder of his Autobiography. Negotiation there. *Canada delenda est.* My Pamphlet. Its reception and effect. Projects drawn from me concerning the Conquest. Acquaintance made and their services to me — Mrs. S. M. Small, Sir John P., Mr. Wood, Sargent Strahan, and others. Their characters. Doctorate from Edinburgh, St. Andrew's. Doctorate from Oxford. Journey to Scotland. Lord Leicester, Mr. Prat. De Grey. Jackson. State of Affairs in England. Delays. Eventful Journey into Holland and Flanders. Agency from Maryland. Son's appointment. My Return. Allowance and thanks. Journey to Boston. John Penn, Governor. My conduct toward him. The Paxton Murders. My Pamphlet. Rioters march to Philadelphia. Governor retires to my House. My conduct. Sent out to the Insurgents. Turn them back. Little thanks. Disputes revived. Resolutions against continuing under Proprietary Government. Another Pamphlet. Cool thoughts. Sent again to England with Petition. Negotiation there.

Lord H. His character. Agencies from New Jersey, Georgia, Massachusetts. Journey into Germany, 1766. Civilities received there. Göttingen Observations. Ditto into France in 1767. Ditto

in 1769. Entertainment there at the Academy. Introduced to the King and the Mesdames, Mad. Victoria and Mrs. Lamagnon. Duc de Chaulnes, M. Beaumont, Le Roy, D'Alibard, Nollet. See Journals. Holland. Reprint my papers and add many. Books presented to me from many authors. My Book translated into French. Lightning Kite. Various Discoveries. My manner of prosecuting that Study. King of Denmark invites me to dinner. Recollect my Father's Proverb. Stamp Act. My opposition to it. Recommendation of J. Hughes. Amendment of it. Examination in Parliament. Reputation it gave me. Caressed by Ministry. Charles Townsend's Act. Opposition to it. Stoves and chimney-plates. Armonica. Acquaintance with Ambassadors. Russian Intimation. Writing in newspapers. Glasses from Germany. Grant of Land in Nova Scotia. Sicknesses. Letters to America returned hither. The consequences. Insurance Office. My character. Costs me nothing to be civil to inferiors ; a good deal to be submissive to superiors, &c., &c. Farce of Perpetual Motion. Writing for Jersey Assembly. Hutchinson letters. Temple. Suit in Chancery. Abuse before the Privy Council. Lord Hillsborough's character and conduct. Lord Dartmouth. Negotiation to prevent the War. Return to America. Bishop of St. Asaph. Congress. Assembly. Committee of Safety. Chevaux-de-frise. Sent to Boston, to the Camp. To Canada, to Lord Howe. To France. Treaty, &c.

FRANKLIN AND THE COMMITTEE PRESENTING THE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

After a tablet on the pedestal of the statue by Greenough

SELECTIONS FROM

THE WRITINGS OF BENJAMIN FRANKLIN[1]

Rules for a Club Established for Mutual Improvement

PREVIOUS QUESTION, TO BE ANSWERED AT EVERY MEETING

Have you read over these queries this morning, in order to consider what you might have to offer the Junto touching any one of them? viz.: —

1. Have you met with any thing in the author you last read, remarkable, or suitable to be communicated to the Junto? particularly in history, morality, poetry, physic, travels, mechanic arts, or other parts of knowledge.

2. What new story have you lately heard agreeable for telling in conversation?

3. Hath any citizen in your knowledge failed in his business lately, and what have you heard of the cause?

4. Have you lately heard of any citizen's thriving well, and by what means?

5. Have you lately heard how any present rich man, here or elsewhere, got his estate?

6. Do you know of a fellow citizen, who has lately done a worthy action, deserving praise and imitation; or who has lately committed an error, proper for us to be warned against and avoid?

7. What unhappy effects of intemperance have you

[1] The spelling, capitals, and punctuation of the original have been retained in these selections. In many respects they do not correspond with present practice.

lately observed or heard; of imprudence, of passion, or of any other vice or folly?

8. What happy effects of temperance, of prudence, of moderation, or of any other virtue?

9. Have you or any of your acquaintance been lately sick or wounded? If so, what remedies were used, and what were their effects?

10. Whom do you know that are shortly going voyages or journeys, if one should have occasion to send by them?

11. Do you think of any thing at present, in which the Junto may be serviceable to *mankind*, to their country, to their friends, or to themselves?

12. Hath any deserving stranger arrived in town since last meeting, that you have heard of? And what have you heard or observed of his character or merits? And whether, think you, it lies in the power of the Junto to oblige him, or encourage him as he deserves?

13. Do you know of any deserving young beginner lately set up, whom it lies in the power of the Junto any way to encourage?

14. Have you lately observed any defect in the laws of your *country*, of which it would be proper to move the legislature for an amendment? Or do you know of any beneficial law that is wanting?

15. Have you lately observed any encroachment on the just liberties of the people?

16. Hath any body attacked your reputation lately? And what can the Junto do towards securing it?

17. Is there any man whose friendship you want, and which the Junto, or any of them, can procure for you?

18. Have you lately heard any member's character attacked, and how have you defended it?

19. Hath any man injured you, from whom it is in the power of the Junto to procure redress?

20. In what manner can the Junto, or any of them, assist you in any of your honourable designs?

21. Have you any weighty affair on hand, in which you think the advice of the Junto may be of service?

22. What benefits have you lately received from any man not present?

23. Is there any difficulty in matters of opinion, of justice, and injustice, which you would gladly have discussed at this time?

24. Do you see any thing amiss in the present customs or proceedings of the Junto, which might be amended?

S. II. 88.

Articles of Belief and Acts of Religion

FIRST PRINCIPLES

I believe there is one supreme, most perfect Being, Author and Father of the Gods themselves. For I believe that Man is not the most perfect Being but one, rather that as there are many Degrees of Beings his Inferiors, so there are many Degrees of Beings superior to him.

Also, when I stretch my Imagination thro' and beyond our System of Planets, beyond the visible fix'd Stars themselves, into that Space that is every Way infinite, and conceive it fill'd with Suns like ours, each with a Chorus of Worlds forever moving round him, then this little Ball on which we move, seems, even in my narrow

Imagination, to be almost Nothing, and myself less than nothing, and of no sort of Consequence.

When I think thus, I imagine it a great Vanity in me to suppose, that the *Supremely Perfect* does in the least regard such an inconsiderable Nothing as Man. More especially, since it is impossible for me to have any positive clear idea of that which is infinite and incomprehensible, I cannot conceive otherwise than that he *the Infinite Father* expects or requires no Worship or Praise from us, but that he is even infinitely above it.

But, since there is in all Men something like a natural principle, which inclines them to DEVOTION, or the Worship of some unseen Power;

And since Men are endued with Reason superior to all other Animals, that we are in our World acquainted with;

Therefore I think it seems required of me, and my Duty as a Man, to pay Divine Regards to SOMETHING.

I conceive then, that the INFINITE has created many beings or Gods, vastly superior to Man, who can better conceive his Perfections than we, and return him a more rational and glorious Praise.

As, among Men, the Praise of the Ignorant or of Children is not regarded by the ingenious Painter or Architect, who is rather honour'd and pleas'd with the approbation of Wise Men & Artists.

It may be that these created Gods are immortal; or it may be that after many Ages, they are changed, and others Supply their Places.

Howbeit, I conceive that each of these is exceeding

wise and good, and very powerful; and that Each has made for himself one glorious Sun, attended with a beautiful and admirable System of Planets.

It is that particular Wise and good God, who is the author and owner of our System, that I propose for the object of my praise and adoration.

For I conceive that he has in himself some of those Passions he has planted in us, and that, since he has given us Reason whereby we are capable of observing his Wisdom in the Creation, he is not above caring for us, being pleas'd with our Praise, and offended when we slight Him, or neglect his Glory.

I conceive for many Reasons, that he is a *good Being;* and as I should be happy to have so wise, good, and powerful a Being my Friend, let me consider in what manner I shall make myself most acceptable to him.

Next to the Praise resulting from and due to his Wisdom, I believe he is pleas'd and delights in the Happiness of those he has created; and since without Virtue Man can have no Happiness in this World, I firmly believe he delights to see me Virtuous, because he is pleased when he sees Me Happy.

And since he has created many Things, which seem purely design'd for the Delight of Man, I believe he is not offended, when he sees his Children solace themselves in any manner of pleasant exercises and Innocent Delights; and I think no Pleasure innocent, that is to Man hurtful.

I *love* him therefore for his Goodness, and I *adore* him for his Wisdom.

Let me then not fail to praise my God continually, for it is his Due, and it is all I can return for his many

Favours and great Goodness to me; and let me resolve to be virtuous, that I may be happy, that I may please Him, who is delighted to see me happy. Amen!

. . . . . .

THANKS

For peace and liberty, for food and raiment, for corn, and wine, and milk, and every kind of healthful nourishment, — Good God, I thank thee!

For the common benefits of air and light; for useful fire and delicious water, — Good God, I thank thee!

For knowledge, and literature, and every useful art, for my friends and their prosperity, and for the fewness of my enemies, — Good God, I thank thee!

For all thy innumerable benefits; for life, and reason, and the use of speech; for health and joy, and every pleasant hour, — My good God, I thank thee!

S. II. 91.

[These *Articles of Belief and Acts of Religion*, Franklin carried with him as a daily companion, to the time of his death. The manuscript is now in the Library of Congress. The divisions entitled "Adoration" and "Petition" are given in S. II. 94–9.]

Hints for Those that would be Rich

[October, 1736]

The Use of Money is all the Advantage there is in having Money.

For £6 a Year you may have the Use of £100 if you are a Man of known Prudence and Honesty.

He that spends a Groat a day idly, spends idly above £6 a year, which is the Price of using £100.

He that wastes idly a Groat's worth of his Time per

Day, one Day with another, wastes the Privilege of using £100 each Day.

He that idly loses 5s. worth of time, loses 5s. and might as prudently throw 5s. in the River.

He that loses 5s. not only loses that Sum, but all the Advantage that might be made by turning it in Dealing, which, by the time that a young Man becomes old, amounts to a comfortable Bag of Money.

Again, He that sells upon Credit, asks a Price for what he sells equivalent to the Principal and Interest of his Money for the Time he is like to be kept out of it: therefore He that buys upon Credit, pays Interest for what he buys. And he that pays ready Money, might let that Money out to Use; so that He that possesses any Thing he has bought, pays Interest for the Use of it.

Consider then when you are tempted to buy any unnecessary Householdstuff, or any superfluous thing, whether you will be willing to pay *Interest, and Interest upon Interest* for it as long as you live; and more if it grows worse by using.

Yet, in buying goods, 't is best to pay Ready Money, because, He that sells upon Credit, expects to lose 5 *per Cent* by bad Debts; therefore he charges, on all he sells upon Credit, an Advance that shall make up that Deficiency.

Those who pay for what they buy upon Credit, pay their Share of this Advance.

He that pays ready Money, escapes or may escape that Charge.

A Penny sav'd is Twopence clear,
A Pin a Day is a Groat a Year.

From *Poor Richard's Almanac.* S. II. 211.

The Country Man

Happy Man whose wish and care
A few paternal Acres bound,
Content to breathe his native Air,
In his own ground.
Whose Herds with Milk, whose Fields with Bread,
Whose Flocks supply him with Attire,
Whose trees in Summer yield him Shade,
In Winter Fire.
Blest, who can unconcernedly find
Hours, Days and Years slide soft away,
In Health of Body, Peace of Mind,
Quiet by Day.
Sound Sleep by Night; Study and Ease
Together mixt; sweet Recreation,
And Innocence which most doth please
With Meditation.
Thus let me live, unseen, unknown,
Thus, unlamented, let me die,
Steal from the World, and not a Stone
Tell where I lie.

Poor Richard's Almanac, 1844.

A Whirlwind

[From a letter to Peter Collinson, written in Philadelphia, August 25, 1755.]

Being in *Maryland*, riding with Colonel *Tasker*, and some other gentlemen to his country-seat, where I and my son were entertained by that amiable and worthy

man with great hospitality and kindness, we saw in the vale below us, a small whirlwind beginning in the road, and shewing itself by the dust it raised and contained. It appeared in the form of a sugar-loaf, spinning on its point, moving up the hill towards us, and enlarging as it came forward. When it passed by us, its smaller part near the ground, appeared no bigger than a common barrel, but widening upwards, it seemed, at 40 or 50 feet high, to be 20 or 30 feet in diameter. The rest of the company stood looking after it, but my curiosity being stronger, I followed it, riding close by its side, and observed its licking up, in its progress, all the dust that was under its smaller part. As it is a common opinion that a shot, fired through a waterspout, will break it, I tried to break this little whirlwind, by striking my whip frequently through it, but without any effect. Soon after, it quitted the road and took into the woods, growing every moment larger and stronger, raising, instead of dust, the old dry leaves with which the ground was thick covered, and making a great noise with them and the branches of the trees, bending some tall trees round in a circle swiftly and very surprizingly, though the progressive motion of the whirl was not so swift but that a man on foot might have kept pace with it; but the circular motion was amazingly rapid. By the leaves it was now filled with, I could plainly perceive that the current of air they were driven by, moved upwards in a spiral line; and when I saw the trunks and bodies of large trees invelop'd in the passing whirl, which continued intire after it had left them I no longer wondered that my whip had no effect on it in its smaller state. I accompanied it about three quarters of a mile, till some limbs of dead trees,

broken off by the whirl, flying about and falling near me, made me more apprehensive of danger; and then I stopped, looking at the top of it as it went on, which was visible, by means of the leaves contained in it, for a very great height above the trees. Many of the leaves, as they got loose from the upper and widest part, were scattered in the wind; but so great was their height in the air, that they appeared no bigger than flies. My son, who was by this time come up with me, followed the whirlwind till it left the woods, and crossed an old tobacco-field, where, finding neither dust nor leaves to take up, it gradually became invisible below as it went away over that field. The course of the general wind then blowing was along with us as we travelled, and the progressive motion of the whirlwind was in a direction nearly opposite, though it did not keep a strait line, nor was its progressive motion uniform, it making little sallies on either hand as it went, proceeding sometimes faster and sometimes slower, and seeming sometimes for a few seconds almost stationary, then starting forward pretty fast again. When we rejoined the company, they were admiring the vast height of the leaves now brought by the common wind, over our heads. These leaves accompanied us as we travelled, some falling now and then round about us, and some not reaching the ground till we had gone near three miles from the place where we first saw the whirlwind begin. Upon my asking Colonel *Tasker* if such whirlwinds were common in *Maryland*, he answered pleasantly, "No, not at all common; but we got this on purpose to treat Mr. Franklin." And a very high treat it was.

S. III. 273.

A Brief History of the Years 1762–'64

[From a letter to Lord Kames, written in London, June 2, 1765.]

You require my history from the time I set sail for America. I left England about the end of August, 1762, in company with ten sail of merchant ships, under a convoy of a man-of-war. We had a pleasant passage to Madeira, where we were kindly received and entertained; our nation being then in high honour with the Portuguese, on account of the protection we were then affording them against the united invasions of France and Spain. 'Tis a fertile island, and the different heights and situations among its mountains afford such temperaments of air, that all the fruits of northern and southern countries are produced there; corn, grapes, apples, peaches, oranges, lemons, plantains, bananas, &c. Here we furnished ourselves with fresh provisions, and refreshments of all kinds; and, after a few days, proceeded on our voyage, running southward until we got into the trade winds, and then with them westward, till we drew near the coast of America. The weather was so favourable, that there were few days in which we could not visit from ship to ship, dining with each other, and on board of the man-of-war; which made the time pass agreeably, much more so than when one goes in a single ship; for this was like travelling in a moving village, with all one's neighbours about one.

On the 1st of November, I arrived safe and well at my own home, after an absence of near six years, found my wife and daughter well; the latter grown quite a woman, with many amiable accomplishments acquired in

my absence; and my friends as hearty and affectionate as ever, with whom my house was filled for many days, to congratulate me on my return. I had been chosen yearly during my absence to represent the city of Philadelphia in our provincial Assembly; and, on my appearance in the House, they voted me £3000 Sterling for my services in England, and their thanks delivered by the Speaker. In February following my son arrived with my new daughter; for, with my consent and approbation, he married soon after I left England a very agreeable West India lady, with whom he is very happy. I accompanied him into his government, where he met with the kindest reception from the people of all ranks, and has lived with them ever since in the greatest harmony. A river only parts that province and ours, and his residence is within seventeen miles of me, so that we frequently see each other.

In the spring of 1763, I set out on a tour through all the northern Colonies to inspect and regulate the Post-offices in the several provinces. In this journey I spent the summer, travelled about 1600 miles, and did not get home till the beginning of November. The Assembly sitting through the following winter, and warm disputes arising between them and the Governor, I became wholly engaged in public affairs; for, besides my duty as an Assemblyman, I had another trust to execute, that of being one of the Commissioners appointed by law to dispose of the public money appropriated to the raising and paying an army to act against the Indians, and defend the frontiers. And then in December, we had two insurrections of the back inhabitants of our province, by whom

twenty poor Indians were murdered, that had, from the first settlement of the province, lived among us, under the protection of our government. This gave me a good deal of employment; for, as the rioters threatened farther mischief, and their actions seemed to be approved by an increasing party, I wrote a pamphlet entitled "*A Narrative, &c.*" (which I think I sent you) to strengthen the hands of our weak Government, by rendering the proceedings of the rioters unpopular and odious. This had a good effect; and afterwards, when a great body of them with arms marched towards the capital, in defiance of the Government, with an avowed resolution to put to death 140 Indian converts then under its protection, I formed an Association at the Governor's request, for his and their defence, we having no militia. Near 1000 of the citizens accordingly took arms; Governor Penn made my house for some time his head-quarters, and did every thing by my advice; so that, for about forty-eight hours, I was a very great man; as I had been once some years before, in a time of public danger: But the fighting face we put on, and the reasonings we used with the insurgents, (for I went at the request of the Governor and Council, with three others, to meet and discourse them,) having turned them back and restored quiet to the city, I became a less man than ever; for I had, by these transactions, made myself many enemies among the populace; and the Governor, (with whose family our public disputes had long placed me in an unfriendly light, and the services I had lately rendered him not being of the kind that make a man acceptable,) thinking it a favourable opportunity, joined the whole weight of the proprie-

tary interest to get me out of the Assembly; which was accordingly effected at the last election, by a majority of about 25 in 4000 voters. The House, however, when they met in October, approved of the resolutions taken while I was Speaker, of petitioning the crown for a change of Government, and requested me to return to England, to prosecute that petition; which service I accordingly undertook, and embarked at the beginning of November last, being accompanied to the ship, sixteen miles, by a cavalcade of three hundred of my friends, who filled our sails with their good wishes, and I arrived in thirty days at London.

Here I have been ever since, engaged in that and other public affairs relating to America, which are like to continue some time longer upon my hands; but I promise you, that when I am quit of these, I will engage in no other; and that, as soon as I have recovered the ease and leisure I hope for, the task you require of me, of finishing my *Art of Virtue*, shall be performed. In the mean time, I must request you would excuse me on this consideration, that the powers of the mind are possessed by different men in different degrees, and that every one cannot, like Lord Kames, intermix literary pursuits and important business without prejudice to either.

S. IV. 373.

A Visit in Paris

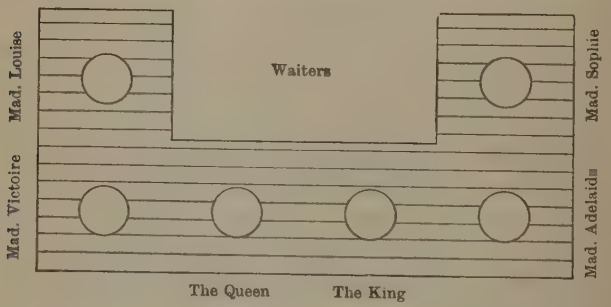
[From a letter to Miss Mary Stevenson, written in Paris, September 14, 1767.]

Soon after I left you in that agreable Society at Bromley, I took the Resolution of making a Trip with Sir John Pringle into France. We set out the 28th past. All the way to Dover we were furnished with PostChaises, hung so as to lean forward, the Top coming down over one's Eyes, like a Hood, as if to prevent one's seeing the Country; which being one of my great Pleasures, I was engag'd in perpetual Disputes with the Innkeepers, Hostlers, and Postilions, about getting the Straps taken up a Hole or two before, and let down as much behind, they insisting that the Chaise leaning forward was an Ease to the Horses, and that the contrary would kill them. I suppose the chaise leaning forward looks to them like a Willingness to go forward, and that its hanging back shows a Reluctance. They added other Reasons, that were no Reasons at all, and made me, as upon a 100 other Occasions, almost wish that Mankind had never been endow'd with a reasoning Faculty, since they know so little how to make use of it, and so often mislead themselves by it, and that they had been furnish'd with a good sensible Instinct instead of it.

At Dover, the next Morning, we embark'd for Calais with a Number of Passengers, who had never been before at sea. They would previously make a hearty Breakfast, because, if the Wind should fail, we might not get over till Supper time. Doubtless they thought that when they had paid for their Breakfast they had a Right to it, and

that, when they had swallowed it they were sure of it. But they had scarce been out half an Hour, before the Sea laid Claim to it, and they were oblig'd to deliver it up. So it seems that there are Uncertainties, even beyond those between the Cup and the Lip. . . .

You see I speak of the Queen as if I had seen her, and so I have; for you must know I have been at Court. We went to Versailles last Sunday, and had the Honour of being presented to the King; he spoke to both of us



very graciously and chearfully, is a handsome Man, has a very lively Look, and appears younger than he is. In the Evening we were at the *Grand Couvert*, where the family sup in Publick. The Form of their Sitting at the Table was this: The table was as you see half a Hollow Square, the Service Gold. When either made a Sign for Drink, the Word was given by one of the Waiters; *A boire pour le Roy*, or, *A boire pour la Reine*. Then two persons within the Square approach'd, one with Wine the other with Water in *Caraffes;* each drank a little Glass of what he brought, and then put both the *Caraffes*

with a glass on a Salver, and presented it. Their Distance from each other was such, as that other Chairs might have been plac'd between any two of them. An Officer of the Court brought us up thro' the Crowd of Spectators, and plac'd Sir John so as to stand between the King and Madame Adelaide, and me between the Queen and Madame Victoire. The King talk'd a good deal to Sir John, asking many Questions about our Royal Family ; and did me too the Honour of taking some Notice of me ; that 's saying enough, for I would not have you think me so much pleas'd with this King and Queen, as to have a Whit less regard than I us'd to have for ours. No Frenchman shall go beyond me in thinking my own King and Queen the very best in the World, and the most amiable.

Versailles has had infinite Sums laid out in building it and supplying it with Water. Some say the Expences exceeded 80 Millions Sterling. The Range of Building is immense ; the Garden-Front most magnificent, all of hewn Stone ; the number of Statues, Figures, Urns, &c., in Marble and Bronze of exquisite Workmanship, is beyond Conception. But the Waterworks are out of Repair, and so is great part of the Front next the Town, looking with its shabby half-Brick Walls, and broken Windows, not much better than the Houses in Durham Yard. There is, in short, both at Versailles and Paris, a prodigious Mixture of Magnificence and Negligence, with every kind of Elegance except that of Cleanliness, and what we call *Tidyness*. Tho' I must do Paris the Justice to say, that in two Points of Cleanliness they exceed us. The Water they drink, tho' from the River, they render

as pure as that of the best Spring, by filtring it thro' Cisterns fill'd with Sand; and the Streets by constant Sweeping are fit to walk in, tho' there is no pav'd foot-Path. Accordingly, many well-dress'd people are constantly seen walking in them. The Crowds of Coaches and Chairs for this Reason is not so great. Men, as well as Women, carry Umbrellas in their Hands, which they extend in case of Rain or two (sic) much sun; and a Man with an Umbrella not taking up more than 3 foot square, or 9 square feet of the Street, when, if in a Coach, he would take up 240 square feet, you can easily conceive that tho' the Streets here are narrower they may be much less encumber'd. They are extreamly well pav'd, and the Stones, being generally Cubes, when worn on one Side, may be turn'd and become new.

The Civilities we everywhere receive give us the strongest Impressions of the French Politeness. It seems to be a Point settled here universally, that Strangers are to be treated with Respect; and one has just the same Deference shewn one here by being a Stranger, as in England by being a Lady. The Customhouse Officers at Port St. Denis, as we enter'd Paris, were about to seize 2 doz of excellent Bordeaux Wine given us at Boulogne, and which we brought with us; but, as soon as they found we were Strangers, it was immediately remitted on that Account. At the Church of Notre Dame, where we went to see a magnificent Illumination, with Figures, &c., for the deceas'd Dauphiness, we found an immense Crowd, who were kept out by Guards; but, the Officer being told that we were Strangers from England, he immediately admitted us, accompanied and show'd us every thing. Why

don't we practice this Urbanity to Frenchmen? Why should they be allowed to outdo us in any thing?

Here is an Exhibition of Paintings like ours in London, to which Multitudes flock daily. I am not Connoisseur enough to judge which has most Merit. Every Night, Sundays not excepted here are Plays or Operas; and tho' the Weather has been hot, and the Houses full, one is not incommoded by the Heat so much as with us in Winter. They must have some Way of changing the Air, that we are not acquainted with. I shall enquire into it.

Travelling is one Way of lengthening Life, at least in Appearance. It is but about a Fortnight since we left London, but the Variety of Scenes we have gone through makes it seem equal to Six Months living in one Place. Perhaps I have suffered a greater Change, too, in my own Person, than I could have done in Six Years at home. I had not been here Six Days, before my Taylor and Perruquier had transform'd me into a Frenchman. Only think what a Figure I make in a little Bag-Wig and naked Ears! They told me I was become 20 Years younger, and look'd very galante. . . .

This Letter shall cost you a Shilling, and you may consider it cheap, when you reflect, that it has cost me at least 50 Guineas to get into the Situation, that enables me to write it. Besides, I might, if I had staied at home, have won perhaps two Shillings of you at Cribbidge. By the Way, now I mention Cards, let me tell you that Quadrille is quite out of Fashion here, and English Whisk all the Mode at Paris and the Court.

The Journey in Ireland

[From a letter to Thomas Cushing, written in London, January 13, 1772. The letter is formal and has the character of an official report, or narrative. Lord Hillsborough was Colonial Secretary at this time.]

Being in Dublin at the same Time with his Lordship [Lord Hillsborough], I met with him accidentally at the Lord Lieutenant's, who had happened to invite us to dine with a large Company on the same Day. As there is something curious in our Interview in Ireland I must give you an Account of it. He was surprizingly civil, and urg'd my fellow Traveller and me to call at his House in our intended Journey Northwards where we might be sure of better Accommodations than the Inns would afford us. He press'd us so politely, that it was not easy to refuse, without apparent Rudeness, as we must pass through his town, Hillsborough, and by his Door; and therefore, as it might afford an Opportunity of saying something on American Affairs, I concluded to comply with his Invitation.

His Lord[p] went home some time before we left Dublin. We call'd upon him, and were detain'd at his House four Days, during which time he entertain'd us with great Civility, and a particular Attention to me that appear'd the more extraordinary, as I knew that just before I left London he had express'd himself concerning me in very angry Terms, calling me a Republican, a factious, mischievous Fellow, and the like. . . .

Before leaving Ireland I must mention, that, being desirous of seeing the principal Patriots there, I staid till the Opening of their Parliament. I found them dispos'd to be friends of America, in which I en-

deavoured to confirm them, with the Expectation that our growing Weight might in time be thrown into their Scale, and, by joining our Interest with theirs might be obtained for them as well as for us, a more equitable Treatment from this Nation. There are many brave Spirits among them. The Gentry are a very sensible, polite, friendly and handsome People. Their Parliament makes a most respectable Figure, with a number of very good Speakers in both Parties, and able Men of Business. And I must not omit acquainting you, that, it being a standing Rule to admit Members of the English Parliament to sit (tho' they do not vote) in the House among the Members, while others are only admitted into the Gallery, my Fellow Traveller, being an English Member, was accordingly admitted as such. But I supposed I must go to the Gallery, when the Speaker stood up, and acquainted the House, that he understood there was in Town an American Gentlemen of (as he was pleas'd to say) distinguish'd Character and Merit, a Member or Delegate of some of the Parliaments of that Country, who was desirous of being present at the Debates of this House; that there was a Rule of the House for admitting Members of English Parliaments, and that he did suppose the House would consider the American Assemblies as English Parliaments; but, as this was the first Instance, he had chosen not to give any Order in it without receiving their Directions. On the Question, the whole House gave a loud, unanimous Aye; when two Members came to me without the Bar where I was standing, led me in, and placed me very honourably. This I am the more particular in to you, as I esteemed it

a mark of respect for our Country, and a piece of politeness in which I hope our Parliament will not fall behind theirs, whenever an occasion shall offer. Ireland is itself a poor Country, and Dublin a magnificent City; but the appearances of general extreme poverty among the lower people are amazing. They live in wretched hovels of mud and straw, are clothed in rags, and subsist chiefly on potatoes. Our New England farmers, of the poorest sort, in regard to the Enjoyment of all the comforts of life, are princes when compared to them. Such is the effect of the discouragements of industry, the non-residence not only of pensioners, but of many original landlords, who lease their lands in gross to undertakers that rack the tenants and fleece them skin and all to make estates to themselves, while the first rents, as well as most of the pensions, are spent out of the country. An English gentleman there said to me, that by what he had heard of the good grazing in North America, and by what he saw of the plenty of flaxseed imported in Ireland from thence, he could not understand why we did not rival Ireland in the beef and butter trade to the West Indies, and share with it in its linen trade. But he was satisfied when I told him that I supposed the reason might be, *our people eat beef and butter every day, and wear shirts themselves.*

In short, the chief exports of Ireland seem to be pinched off the backs and out of the bellies of the miserable inhabitants. But schemes are now under consideration among the humane gentry to provide some means of mending if possible their present wretched condition.

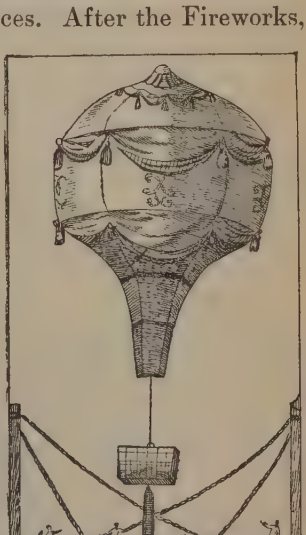
S. V. 364.

The Balloon in 1783

[From letters to Sir Joseph Banks, written in Passy.]

October 8, 1783.

The Duke de Crillon made a Feast last week in the Bois de Boulogne just by my Habitation, on Occasion of the Birth of two Spanish Princes. After the Fireworks, we had a Balloon of about 5 feet Diameter, fill'd with permanent inflammable Air. It was dismiss'd about One o'Clock in the Morning. It carried under it a large Lanthorn with Inscriptions on its Sides. The Night was quite calm and clear, so that it went right up. The Appearance of the Light diminish'd gradually till it appear'd no bigger than one of the Stars, and in about 20 minutes I lost sight of it entirely. It fell the next day on the other side of the same Wood near the Village Boulogne, about half after 12, having been suspended in the Air 11 hours and a half. It lodg'd in a Tree, and was torn in getting it down; so that it cannot be ascertain'd whether it burst when above or not, tho' that is suppos'd. Smaller Repititions of the Experiment are making every day in all Quarters. Some of the



Montgolfier's First Balloon
Franklin witnessed its ascent
August 27, 1783

larger Balloons that have been up, are preparing to be sent up again, in a few Days; but I do not hear of any material Improvements yet made either in the mechanical or chemical Parts of the Operation. Most is expected from the new one undertaken upon Subscription by Messieurs Charles & Robert, who are Men of Science and mechanical Dexterity. It is to carry up a Man. I send you enclos'd the Proposals, which it is said are already subscribed to by a considerable Number, and likely to be carried into Execution. If I am well at the Time, I purpose to be present, being a Subscriber myself, and shall send you an exact Account of Particulars. . . .

PASSY, Nov. 21, 1783.

. . . This Balloon was larger than that which went up from Versailles, and carried the Sheep, &c. Its Bottom was open, and in the middle of the Opening was fix'd a kind of Basket Grate in which Faggots and Sheaves of Straw were burnt. The Air rarified in passing thro' this flame rose in the Balloon, swell'd out its Sides & fill'd it.

The Persons who were plac'd in the Gallery made of Wicker, and attach'd to the Outside near the Bottom, had each of them a Post thro' which they could pass sheaves of Straw into the Grate to keep up the Flame, & thereby keep the Balloon full. When it went over our Heads, we could see the Fire which was very considerable. As the Flame slackens, the rarified Air cools and condenses, the Bulk of the Balloon diminishes and it begins to descend. If these in the Gallery see it likely to descend in an improper Place they can, by throwing on

more Straw, & renewing the Flame, make it rise again, and the Wind carries it farther.

La Machine poussée par le Vent s'est dirigée sur une des Allées du Jardin.[1] That is, against the Trees of one of the Walks. The Gallery hitch'd among the top Boughs of those Trees which had been cut and were stiff, while the Body of the Balloon lean'd beyond & seem'd likely to overset. I was then in great Pain for the Men, thinking them in Danger of being thrown out, or burnt; for I expected that the Balloon being no longer upright, the Flame would have laid hold of the Inside that lean'd over it. But by means of some Cords that were still attach'd to it, it was soon brought upright again, made to descend, & carried back to its place. It was however much damag'd.

Planant sur l'Horizon.[1] When they were as high as they chose to be, they made less Flame, and suffer'd the Machine to drive horizontally with the Wind, of which however they felt very little, as they went with it, and as fast. They say they had a charming View of Paris & its Environs, the Course of the River, &c. but that they were once lost, not knowing what Part they were over, till they saw the Dome of the Invalids, which rectified their Ideas. Probably while they were employ'd in keeping up the Fire, the Machine might turn, and by that means they were *desorienté* as the French call it.

There was a vast Concourse of Gentry in the Garden, who had great Pleasure in seeing the Adventures go off so chearfully, & applauded them by clapping, &c. but

[1] Franklin is here explaining to his correspondent certain items in the French account of the balloon ascension which he sent with this letter.

there was at the same time a good deal of Anxiety for their Safety. Multitudes in Paris saw the Balloon passing; but did not know there were Men with it, it being then so high that they could not see them. . . .

One of these courageous Philosophers, the Marquis d'Arlandes, did me the Honour to call upon me in the Evening after the Experiment with Mr. Mongolfier the very ingenious Inventor. I was happy to see him safe. He inform'd me they lit gently without the least Shock, and the Balloon was very little damag'd. . . .

By the emulation between the two parties running high, the improvement in the construction and management of the balloons has already made a rapid progress, and one cannot say how far it may go. A few months since the idea of witches riding thro' the air upon a broomstick, and that of philosophers upon a bag of smoke, would have appeared equally impossible and ridiculous.

These machines must always be subject to be driven by the winds. Perhaps mechanic art may find easy means to give them progressive motion in a calm, and to slant them a little in the wind. . . .

PASSY, December 1, 1783.

. . . The morning was foggy, but about one o'clock the air became tolerably clear, to the great satisfaction of the spectators, who were infinite, notice having been given of the intended experiment several days before in the papers, so that all Paris was out, either about the Tuileries, on the quays and bridges, in the fields, the streets, at the windows, or on the tops of houses, besides the inhabitants of all the towns and villages of the en-

virons. Never before was a philosophical experiment so magnificently attended. Some guns were fired to give notice that the departure of the balloon was near, and a small one was discharged, which went to an amazing height, there being but little wind to make it deviate from its perpendicular course, and at length the sight of it was lost. Means were used, I am told, to prevent the great balloon's rising so high as might endanger its bursting. Several bags of sand were taken on board before the cord that held it down was cut, and the whole weight being then too much to be lifted, such a quantity was discharged as to permit its rising slowly. Thus it would sooner arrive at that region where it would be in equilibrio with the surrounding air, and by discharging more sand afterwards, it might go higher if desired. Between one and two o'clock, all eyes were gratified with seeing it rise majestically from among the trees, and ascend gradually above the buildings, a most beautiful spectacle. When it was about two hundred feet high, the brave adventurers held out and waved a little white pennant, on both sides their car, to salute the spectators, who returned loud claps of applause. The wind was very little, so that the object though moving to the northward, continued long in view; and it was a great while before the admiring people began to disperse. The persons embarked were Mr. Charles, professor of experimental philosophy, and a zealous promoter of that science; and one of the Messieurs Robert, the very ingenious constructors of the machine. When it arrived at its height, which I suppose might be three or four hundred toises, it appeared to have only horizontal motion. I had a pocket-glass, with

which I followed it, till I lost sight first of the men, and then of the car, and when I last saw the balloon, it appeared no bigger than a walnut. I write this at seven in the evening. What became of them is not yet known here. I hope they descended by daylight, so as to see and avoid falling among trees or on houses, and that the experiment was completed without any mischievous accident, which the novelty of it and the want of experience might well occasion. I am the more anxious for the event, because I am not well informed of the means provided for letting themselves down, and the loss of these very ingenious men would not only be a discouragement to the progress of the art, but be a sensible loss to science and society.

I shall enclose one of the tickets of admission, on which the globe was represented, as originally intended, but is altered by the pen to show its real state when it went off. When the tickets were engraved the car was to have been hung to the neck of the globe, as represented by a little drawing I have made in the corner.

I suppose it may have been an apprehension of danger in straining too much the balloon or tearing the silk, that induced the constructors to throw a net over it, fixed to a hoop which went round its middle, and to hang the car to that hoop.

Tuesday morning, December 2d. — I am relieved from my anxiety by hearing that the adventurers descended well near L'Isle Adam before sunset. This place is near seven leagues from Paris. Had the wind blown fresh they might have gone much farther.

S. IX. 106, 114, 119.

Sketch of the Services of B. Franklin to the United States of America

[Written by Franklin, in December, 1788. In a letter accompanying this sketch of services, he characterizes them as "extra services I performed that do not appertain to the office of Plenipotentiary, viz.: as Judge of Admiralty, as Consul before the arrival of Mr. Barclay, as Banker in examining and accepting the multitude of Bills of exchange, and as Secretary for several years, none being sent to me, tho' other ministers were allowed such assistance."]

In England, he combated the Stamp Act, and his writings in the papers against it, with his examination in Parliament, were thought to have contributed much to its repeal.

He opposed the Duty Act; and, though he could not prevent its passing, he obtained of Mr. Townshend an omission of several articles, particularly salt.

In the subsequent difference he wrote and published many papers, refuting the claim of Parliament to tax the colonies.

He opposed all the oppressive acts.

He had two secret negotiations with the ministers for their repeal, of which he has written a narrative. In this he offered payment for the destroyed tea, at his own risk, in case they were repealed.

He was joined with Messrs. Bollan and Lee in all the applications to government for that purpose. Printed several pamphlets at his own considerable expense against the then measures of government, whereby he rendered himself obnoxious, was disgraced before the privy council, deprived of a place in the postoffice of £300 sterling a year, and obliged to resign his agencies, viz.

of Pennsylvania	£500
of Massachusetts	400
of New Jersey	100
of Georgia	200
	£1200

In the whole £1500 sterling per annum.

Orders were sent to the King's governors not to sign any warrants on the treasury for the orders of his salaries; and, though he was not actually dismissed by the colonies that employed him, yet, thinking the known malice of the court against him rendered him less likely than others to manage their affairs to their advantage, he judged it to be his duty to withdraw from their service, and leave it open for less exceptionable persons, which saved them the necessity of removing him.

Returning to America, he encouraged the Revolution. Was appointed chairman of the Committee of Safety, where he projected the *cheveaux de frise* for securing Philadelphia, then the residence of Congress.

Was sent by Congress to head-quarters near Boston with Messrs. Harrison and Lynch, in 1775, to settle some affairs with the northern governments and General Washington.

In the spring of 1776, was sent to Canada with Messrs. Chase and Carroll, passing the Lakes while they were not yet free from ice. In Canada, was, with his colleagues, instrumental in redressing sundry grievances, and thereby reconciling the people more to our cause. He there advanced to General Arnold and other servants of Congress, then in extreme necessity, £353 in gold, out of his own pocket, on the credit of Congress,

which was of great service at that juncture, in procuring provisions for our army.

Being at the time he was ordered on this service upwards of seventy years of age, he suffered in his health by the hardships of this journey; lodging in the woods, &c., in so inclement a season; but, being recovered, the Congress in the same year ordered him to France. Before his departure, he put all the money he could raise, between three and four thousand pounds, into their hands; which, demonstrating his confidence, encouraged others to lend their money in support of the cause.

He made no bargain for appointments, but was promised by a vote, the *net* salary of £500 sterling per annum, his expense paid, and to be assisted by a secretary, who was to have £1000 per annum, to include all contingencies.

When the Pennsylvania Assembly sent him to England in 1764, on the same salary, they allowed him one year's advance for his passage, and in consideration of the prejudice to his private affairs that must be occasioned by his sudden departure and absence. He has had no such allowance from Congress, was badly accommodated in a miserable vessel, improper for those northern seas, (and which actually foundered in her return,) was badly fed, so that on his arrival he had scarce strength to stand.

His services to the States as commissioner, and afterwards as minister plenipotentiary are known to Congress, as may appear in his correspondence. His *extra services* may not be so well known, and therefore may be here mentioned. No secretary ever arriving, the business

was in part before, and entirely when the other commissioners left him, executed by himself, with the help of his grandson, who at first was only allowed clothes, board, and lodging, and afterwards a salary, never exceeding £300 a year, (except while he served as secretary to the Commissioners for peace,) by which difference in salary, continued many years, the Congress saved, *if they accept it £700 sterling a year.*

He served as *consul* entirely several years, till the arrival of Mr. Barclay, and even after, as that gentleman was obliged to be much and long absent in Holland, Flanders, and England; during which absence, what business of the kind occurred, still came to Mr. Franklin.

He served, though without any special commission for the purpose, as a *judge of admiralty;* for, the Congress having sent him a quantity of blank commissions for privateers, he granted them to cruisers fitted out in the ports of France, some of them manned by old smugglers, who knew every creek on the coast of England, and, running all round the island, distressed the British coasting trade exceedingly, and raised their general insurance. One of those privateers alone, the *Black Prince*, took in the course of a year seventy-five sail! All the papers, taken in each prize brought in, were in virtue of an order of council sent up to Mr. Franklin, who was to examine them, judge of the legality of the capture, and write to the admiralty of the port, that he found the prize good, and that the sale might be permitted. These papers, which are very voluminous, he has to produce.

He served also as *merchant*, to make purchases, and

direct the shipping of stores to a very great value, for which he has charged no commission.

But the part of his service which was the most fatiguing and confining, was that of receiving and accepting, after a due and necessary examination, the bills of exchange drawn by Congress for interest money, to the amount of *two millions and a half of livres annually;* multitudes of the bills very small, each of which, the smallest, gave as much trouble in examining, as the largest. And this careful examination was found absolutely necessary, from the constant frauds attempted by presenting *seconds* and *thirds* for payment after the *firsts* had been discharged. As these bills were arriving more or less by every ship and every post, they required constant attendance. Mr. Franklin could make no journey for exercise, as had been annually his custom, and the confinement brought on a malady that is likely to afflict him while he lives.

In short, though he has always been an active man, he never went through so much business during eight years, in any part of his life, as during those of his residence in France; which however he did not decline till he saw peace happily made, and found himself in the eightieth year of his age; when, if ever, a man has some right to expect repose.

S. IX. 695.

Motion
For Prayers in the Convention

(June 28, 1787.)

Mr. President,

The small Progress we have made, after 4 or 5 Weeks' close Attendance and continual Reasonings with each other, our different Sentiments on almost every Question, several of the last producing as many *Noes* as *Ayes*, is, methinks, a melancholy Proof of the Imperfection of the Human Understanding. We indeed seem to *feel* our own want of political Wisdom, since we have been running all about in Search of it. We have gone back to ancient History for Models of Government, and examin'd the different Forms of those Republics, which, having been originally form'd with the Seeds of their own Dissolution, now no longer exist; and we have view'd modern States all round Europe, but find none of their Constitutions suitable to our Circumstances.

In this Situation of this Assembly, groping, as it were, in the dark to find Political Truth, and scarce able to distinguish it when presented to us, how has it happened, Sir, that we have not hitherto once thought of humbly applying to the Father of Lights to illuminate our Understandings? In the Beginning of the Contest with Britain, when we were sensible of Danger, we had daily Prayers in this Room for the Divine Protection. Our Prayers, Sir, were heard; — and they were graciously answered. All of us, who were engaged in the Struggle, must have observed frequent Instances of a superintending Providence in our Favour. To that kind Providence

we owe this happy Opportunity of Consulting in Peace on the Means of establishing our future national Felicity. And have we now forgotten that powerful Friend? or do we imagine that we no longer need its assistance? I have lived, Sir, a long time; and the longer I live, the more convincing proofs I see of this Truth *that* GOD *governs in the Affairs* of *Men*. And if a Sparrow cannot fall to the Ground without his Notice, is it probable that an Empire can rise without his Aid? We have been assured, Sir, in the Sacred Writings, that "except the Lord build the House, they labour in vain that build it." I firmly believe this; and I also believe, that, without his concurring Aid, we shall succeed in this political Building no better than the Builders of Babel; we shall be divided by our little, partial, local Interests, our Projects will be confounded, and we ourselves shall become a Reproach and a Bye-word down to future Ages. And, what is worse, Mankind may hereafter, from this unfortunate Instance, despair of establishing Government by human Wisdom, and leave it to Chance, War, and Conquest.

I therefore beg leave to move,

That henceforth Prayers, imploring the Assistance of Heaven and its Blessing on our Deliberations, be held in this Assembly every morning before we proceed to Business; and that one or more of the Clergy of this city be requested to officiate in that Service.[1]

S. IX. 600.

[1] *Note by Franklin.* — "The convention, except three or four persons, thought prayers unnecessary!"

Franklin's View of Death

[The sentences quoted below were written at different times, on the death of some friend.]

It is the will of God and Nature that these mortal bodies be laid aside, when the soul is to enter into real life; 't is rather an embryo state, a preparation for living; a man is not completely born till he be dead; why then should we grieve that a new child is born among the immortals, a new member added to their happy society?

Our friend and we are invited abroad — on a party of pleasure — that is to last forever — his carriage was first ready, and he is gone before us; we could not all conveniently start together, and why should you and I be grieved at this, since we are soon to follow, and know where to find him?

Adieu, B. F.

The Whistle

[From a letter to Madame Brillon, written in Passy, November 10, 1779.]

When I was a child of seven years old, my friends, on a holiday, filled my pockets with coppers. I went directly to a shop where they sold toys for children; and, being charmed with the sound of a *whistle*, that I met by the way in the hands of another boy, I voluntarily offered and gave all my money for one. I then came home, and went whistling all over the house, much pleased with my *whistle*, but disturbing all the family. My brothers, and sisters, and cousins, understanding the bargain I had made, told me I had given four times as much for it as it was worth; put me in mind what good

things I might have bought with the rest of the money; and laughed at me so much for my folly, that I cried with vexation; and the reflection gave me more chagrin than the *whistle* gave me pleasure.

This however was afterwards of use to me, the impression continuing on my mind; so that often, when I was tempted to buy some unnecessary thing, I said to myself, *Don't give too much for the whistle;* and I saved my money.

As I grew up, came into the world, and observed the actions of men, I thought I met with many, very many, who *gave too much for the whistle.*

When I saw one too ambitious of court favour, sacrificing his time in attendance on levees, his repose, his liberty, his virtue, and perhaps his friends, to attain it, I have said to myself, *This man gives too much for his whistle.*

When I saw another fond of popularity, constantly employing himself in political bustles, neglecting his own affairs, and ruining them by that neglect, *He pays, indeed,* said I, *too much for his whistle.*

If I knew a miser, who gave up every kind of comfortable living, all the pleasure of doing good to others, all the esteem of his fellow-citizens, and the joys of benevolent friendship, for the sake of accumulating wealth, *Poor man,* said I, *you pay too much for your whistle.*

When I met with a man of pleasure, sacrificing every laudable improvement of the mind, or of his fortune, to mere corporeal sensations, and ruining his health in their pursuit, *Mistaken man,* said I, *you are providing pain for yourself, instead of pleasure; you give too much for your whistle.*

If I see one fond of appearance, or fine clothes, fine houses, fine furniture, fine equipages, all above his fortune, for which he contracts debts, and ends his career in a prison, *Alas!* say I, *he has paid dear, very dear, for his whistle.*

When I see a beautiful, sweet-tempered girl married to an ill-natured brute of a husband, *What a pity*, say I, *that she should pay so much for a whistle!*

In short, I conceive that great part of the miseries of mankind are brought upon them by the false estimates they have made of the value of things, and by their *giving too much for their whistles.*

Yet I ought to have charity for these unhappy people, when I consider, that, with all this wisdom of which I am boasting, there are certain things in this world so tempting, for example, the apples of King John, which happily are not to be bought; for if they were put to sale by auction, I might very easily be led to ruin myself in the purchase, and find that I had once more given too much for the *whistle.*

S. VII. 414.

The Lion and the Dogs

[The fable was probably written soon after the signing of the treaty of peace and refers to the claims of royalists who had lived in the American colonies.]

Lion, king of a certain forest, had among his subjects a body of faithful dogs, in principle and affection strongly attached to his person and government, but through whose assistance he had extended his dominions, and had become the terror of his enemies.

Lion, however, influenced by evil counsellors, took an aversion to the dogs, condemned them unheard, and ordered his tigers, leopards, and panthers to attack and destroy them.

The dogs petitioned humbly, but their petitions were rejected haughtily; and they were forced to defend themselves, which they did with bravery.

A few among them, of a mongrel race, derived from a mixture with wolves and foxes, corrupted by royal promises of great rewards, deserted the honest dogs and joined their enemies.

The dogs were finally victorious: a treaty of peace was made, in which Lion acknowledged them to be free, and disclaimed all future authority over them.

The mongrels not being permitted to return among them, claimed of the royalists the reward that had been promised.

A council of the beasts was held to consider their demand.

The wolves and the foxes agreed unanimously that the demand was just, that royal promises ought to be kept, and that every loyal subject should contribute freely to enable his majesty to fulfil them.

The horse alone, with a boldness and freedom that became the nobleness of his nature, delivered a contrary opinion.

"The King," said he, "has been misled, by bad ministers, to war unjustly upon his faithful subjects. Royal promises, when made to encourage us to act for the public good, should indeed be honourably acquitted; but if to encourage us to betray and destroy each other,

they are wicked and void from the beginning. The advisers of such promises, and those who murdered in consequence of them, instead of being recompensed, should be severely punished. Consider how greatly our common strength is already diminished by our loss of the dogs. If you enable the King to reward those fratricides, you will establish a precedent that may justify a future tyrant to make like promises; and every example of such an unnatural brute rewarded will give them additional weight. Horses and bulls, as well as dogs, may thus be divided against their own kind, and civil wars produced at pleasure, till we are so weakened that neither liberty nor safety is any longer to be found in the forest, and nothing remains but abject submission to the will of a despot, who may devour us as he pleases."

The council had sense enough to resolve — that the demand be rejected.

S. VIII. 650.

A Parable on Brotherly Love

1. In those days there was no worker of iron in all the land. And the merchants of Midian passed by with their camels, bearing spices, and myrrh, and balm, and wares of iron.

2. And Reuben bought an axe of the Ishmaelite merchants, which he prized highly, for there was none in his father's house.

3. And Simeon said unto Reuben his brother, "Lend me, I pray thee, thine axe." But he refused, and would not.

4. And Levi also said unto him, "My brother, lend me, I pray thee, thine axe;" and he refused him also.

5. Then came Judah unto Reuben, and entreated him, saying, "Lo, thou lovest me, and I have always loved thee; do not refuse me the use of thine axe."

6. But Reuben turned from him, and refused him likewise.

7. Now it came to pass, that Reuben hewed timber on the bank of the river, and his axe fell therein, and he could by no means find it.

8. But Simeon, Levi, and Judah had sent a messenger after the Ishmaelites with money, and had bought for themselves each an axe.

9. Then came Reuben unto Simeon, and said, "Lo, I have lost mine axe, and my work is unfinished; lend me thine, I pray thee."

10. And Simeon answered him, saying, "Thou wouldest not lend me thine axe, therefore will I not lend thee mine."

11. Then went he unto Levi, and said unto him, "My brother, thou knowest my loss and my necessity; lend me, I pray thee, thine axe."

12. And Levi reproached him, saying, "Thou wouldest not lend me thine axe when I desired it, but I will be better than thou, and will lend thee mine."

13. And Reuben was grieved at the rebuke of Levi and being ashamed, turned from him, and took not the axe, but sought his brother Judah.

14. And as he drew near, Judah beheld his countenance as it were covered with grief and shame; and he prevented him, saying, "My brother, I know thy loss; but why should it trouble thee? Lo, have I not an axe that will

serve both thee and me? Take it, I pray thee, and use it as thine own."

15. And Reuben fell on his neck, and kissed him, with tears, saying, "Thy kindness is great, but thy goodness in forgiving me is greater. Thou art indeed my brother, and whilst I live, will I surely love thee."

16. And Judah said, "Let us also love our other brethren; behold, are we not all of one blood?"

17. And Joseph saw these things, and reported them to his father Jacob.

18. And Jacob said, "Reuben did wrong, but he repented. Simeon also did wrong; and Levi was not altogether blameless.

19. "But the heart of Judah is princely. Judah hath the soul of a king. His father's children shall bow down before him, and he shall rule over his brethren."

S. VI. 256.

A Petition of the Left Hand

TO THOSE WHO HAVE THE SUPERINTENDENCY OF EDUCATION

I address myself to all the friends of youth, and conjure them to direct their compassionate regards to my unhappy fate, in order to remove the prejudices of which I am the victim. There are twin sisters of us; and the two eyes of man do not more resemble, nor are capable of being upon better terms with each other, than my sister and myself, were it not for the partiality of our parents, who make the most injurious distinctions between us. From my infancy, I have been led to consider my sister as a being of a more elevated rank. I was suffered to grow up without the least instruction, while nothing was spared

in her education. She had masters to teach her writing, drawing, music, and other accomplishments; but if by chance I touched a pencil, a pen, or a needle, I was bitterly rebuked; and more than once I have been beaten for being awkward, and wanting a graceful manner. It is true, my sister associated me with her upon some occasions; but she always made a point of taking the lead, calling upon me only from necessity, or to figure by her side.

But conceive not, Sirs, that my complaints are instigated merely by vanity. No; my uneasiness is occasioned by an object much more serious. It is the practice in our family, that the whole business of providing for its subsistence falls upon my sister and myself. If any indisposition should attack my sister, — and I mention it in confidence upon this occasion, that she is subject to the gout, the rheumatism, and cramp, without making mention of other accidents, — what would be the fate of our poor family? Must not the regret of our parents be excessive, at having placed so great a difference between sisters who are so perfectly equal? Alas! we must perish from distress; for it would not be in my power even to scrawl a suppliant petition for relief, having been obliged to employ the hand of another in transcribing the request which I now have the honour to prefer to you.

Condescend, Sirs, to make my parents sensible of the injustice of an exclusive tenderness, and of the necessity of distributing their care and affection among all their children equally. I am, with a profound respect, Sirs, your obedient servant, THE LEFT HAND.

FRANKLIN SIGNING THE TREATY OF PEACE IN 1783

After a tablet on the pedestal of the statue by Greenough

TOPICS FOR STUDY

I. Franklin, the Printer's Lad

1. For whom did Franklin begin to write his memoirs?

2. For what reasons did he wish to leave an account of his life to his descendants?

3. What objects did he intend to bear in mind in writing the story of his life? Why?

4. Make from the *Autobiography* a diagram of the genealogical tree of the Franklin family, showing the descent, including Benjamin and his brothers and sisters, as far as named.

5. What were the occupations of the Franklins in England? See note, p. 359.

6. Why did Franklin's father change his occupation after his arrival in Boston?

7. Select from Franklin's account of his father's character those qualities which he most admired in him.

8. For what habits did Benjamin think himself most indebted to his father's influence and training?

9. How many occupations were considered for Benjamin?

10. In what occupations were brothers of Benjamin already engaged?

11. How came Benjamin's father to decide that he should be a printer?

12. *Franklin's Reading:*

a. Make a list of the books Benjamin read, as he has given them, up to the time when he ran away; opposite each, note the age at which he read the book.

b. Are any of these books still read?

c. Have you read any one of them? If you have, why did you read it? Did you like it?

d. How did Benjamin obtain his books? Why did he read them? How did he find time for reading? By what lights must he read in the evening?

Note. — This is the advice on reading given later by Franklin himself to a young friend; without doubt he learned the lesson from his own practice. "I would advise you to read with a Pen in your Hand, and enter in a little Book short Hints of what you find that is curious, or that may be useful; for this will be the best way of imprinting such particulars in your memory, where they will be ready either for Practice on some future Occasion, if they are matters of utility, or at least to adorn and improve your conversation, if they are Points of Curiosity. And as many of the Terms of Science are such as you cannot have met with in your Common Reading and may therefore be unacquainted with, I think it would be well for you to have a good Dictionary at hand, to consult immediately when you meet with a Word you do not comprehend the precise Meaning of." S. II. 19.

13. *Learning to write:*

a. When did Benjamin begin to write?

b. How old was he when he began to compose ballads?

c. How was he cured of writing poetry? Had the practice been of use to him? Give reasons for your opinion.

Note. — Ask for volunteers who will write a rhyme of ten lines or more on some familiar subject. Let the same ideas be written in prose by other members of the class; ask,

(1) Which task requires the more thought?

(2) Which task will bring to the mind the greater variety of words from which to choose?

d. In learning to write prose, how did Franklin teach himself,

(1) To express his meaning correctly?

(2) To arrange his thoughts in order?

e. What books did he study in order to learn how to think clearly?

f. When Franklin discovered that his compositions were defective in manner, and inelegant, how did he set about gaining a better style?

Note. — There have been books so well written that they have taught many how to write well. Often, the first mark of ability with the pen is manifest in the boy's taste for books from which the art of composition may be learned. Before he was sixteen, Franklin had found for himself three of the best teachers of composition; these were Bunyan, in *Pilgrim's Progress;* Defoe, in *Robinson Crusoe* and *Essay on Projects;* and Addison, who wrote most of the *Spectator* papers. A hundred years later, Washington Irving wished to learn to write good English prose but found no master to teach him until he discovered *The Spectator.* From these papers and others like them, the author of "The Legend of Sleepy Hollow" and of *Bracebridge Hall* learned to write in the pleasing style we all enjoy.

14. *Learning by conversation:*

Arrange all the reasons you can think of for each one of the two opinions stated below:

a. Is it more beneficial to the individual to express his own views and to explain the facts on which he bases them than to listen to the views of others?

b. Is it more beneficial to the individual to gain information from others than to give it to them? Is the mind more improved by drawing forth the opinions of others, or by defending its own position?

c. Which course did Franklin decide upon as most useful to himself? Why?

d. What did Franklin think the real object to be kept in mind in conversation or in friendly discussion? Do you agree with him?

15. What was the real cause of the difficulties between Benjamin Franklin and his brother James?

16. How did the difficulties of James turn to Benjamin's advantage?

17. *In the Note-book:*

Franklin mentions here one of those errors in his life which he would wish to change in a second edition. In the note-book, enter this *erratum*, with Franklin's age, and the date, and a reference to the page where it is mentioned. Later in his life he tried to make amends for early faults: leave blank the space below on the page, so that you may note there the amends he made and how long after it was.

II. The Run-away Apprentice

1. Would a boy in Franklin's situation to-day remain in his brother's shop to the end of his full time?

a. What would be the arguments for doing so?

b. What reasons would justify his leaving?

c. Do you suppose that Benjamin decided on this act by inclination, or conscience, or judgment?

Note. — For Franklin's opinion of this act when he was older, see *Autobiography*, p. 163.

2. *Composition:* title, "To run away, or not to run away."

Imagine yourself in Franklin's place, trying to decide whether to go or not. Use the first person in thinking and writing and put yourself as far as possible in exactly his situation; you are greatly puzzled and finally resolve to write out all the reasons for going, then all the reasons for not going, that in this way you may make up your mind.

Write these reasons, with a short introduction telling how the plan suggested itself to you. You must think of your parents, your brothers and sisters (which are Franklin's), your friends in Boston, and of many other things, beside the chief reasons with reference to the future and your own inclination. At the close, say which side of the case seems the stronger as you have stated it on paper, and how you decide, and why.

This way of deciding questions was called by Franklin when he was older, "Prudential Algebra." He often advised his friends to practise it when in doubt.

3. *Composition.* We should consider what sort of lad Franklin was at the end of the time he had lived with his parents in Boston, and what his qualifications were for managing his own life and earning a living. His stock in trade, or capital, consisted chiefly in himself, — in what he knew, what he could do, the sort of disposition he possessed, his good sense, and so on. The handicaps in this undertaking would be anything whatever which would make it difficult to succeed in getting work, in winning confidence and friends. Write a composition on Franklin from this point of view, at the time when he was making up his mind whether to run away or not.

4. In how many ways did Franklin show his disposition and qualities on the trip from Boston to Philadelphi ?

5. To what was his first employment due?

6. *Franklin's manner of life in Philadelphia:*

Remember that Franklin was now a lad of seventeen, and express your opinion of his conduct in the following matters, pointing out in what he showed good sense, or what acts of his were careless, vain, or foolish: —

a. Choice of friends.

b. Manner of living.

c. Economy.

d. Secrecy in plans, etc.

e. Spare time.

f. Making plans for himself.

7. To what did Franklin owe the governor's visit?

8. What were the results of this visit to Franklin?

9. How long had Franklin been absent from Boston when he returned?

10. What was his father's reason for refusing to set him up in business? What do you think of it?

11. Explain the difficulties in which Franklin's friendship with Collins placed him.

12. Propose a plan for managing this affair better; especially, a plan by which Franklin might avoid injury to his own reputation, through introducing Collins as his friend. — Different plans will be proposed; let each one criticise the other's plan, showing whether in it Franklin would show himself an honest friend and fulfil such obligations as rested on him.

13. *In the Note-book:*

Franklin's second great *erratum*. How came he to make this mistake?

14. *Summary of Franklin's prospects when he left for England:*

a. Business prospects.

b. Friends who were likely to aid him.

c. Compare Franklin in character, habits, and reputation, with himself when he left Boston; show whether he had gained or lost in these respects.

d. What had he done, if anything, for his own improvement, in this period in Philadelphia?

e. Had he shown any disposition to be helpful to others?

f. Had he in any way shown a self-confident or vain disposition?

g. What had influenced Franklin most since he left home?

h. What had been his influence over others?

III. Eighteen Months in London

1. Give all the reasons which led Franklin to trust in the promises made by Governor Keith?

2. Do you think he could blame himself for having been misled?

3. State as fully as you can the difficulties in which he found himself after he had learned of the governor's perfidy.

4. How did his difficulties aid Franklin in obtaining two good friends? Why was the friendship of these gentlemen of importance to Franklin?

5. The third *erratum.* — Franklin calls the printing of his pamphlet another *erratum;* but gives no reason. Can you see why he should not have printed it?

On p. 107 he mentions this pamphlet again and tells what he thought of it when he was older; should these reasons have influenced him when a boy?

6. *Watts' printing house:*

a. Why did Franklin go there?

b. The customs of the house.

c. What difficulties had Franklin because he was an American? (Notice his nickname, and a sort of hazing he underwent.)

d. How did he finally gain an influence over his companions?

7. How many ways of business were open to Franklin in London? Give the reasons for and against accepting Wygate's offer?

8. What were Franklin's real reasons for accepting Denham's offer?

9. Was this a wise decision just after completing his preparation for the trade of printing?

10. *Franklin's stay in London:*

a. Give Franklin's own summary of what he had gained during his stay in London.

b. What errors did he think he had made?

c. Do you see any advantage to Franklin in this stay in London which he has not mentioned?

d. Do you see any mistakes in his plan of life or conduct which he has not pointed out?

e. State, in order of importance, three of the greatest opportunities open to Franklin while in London.

11. Was Franklin in a better situation to begin life on his return to Philadelphia than when he left it?

Note. — In this discussion mention every additional advantage arising from this trip to London. On the other hand, remember that the experience cost him eighteen months of time which he might have used to advance himself in Philadelphia.

12. Which one of the occupations proposed at any time for Franklin would seem to you best when tested by the following questions?

a. Could he have earned his living by it from the first?

b. What prospect of advancement and permanence did the occupation hold out?

c. What sort of life would probably be Franklin's if he chose the occupation?

Note. — Make out on paper a list of the occupations and set down under each your opinion.

13. *Composition:* Imagine yourself one of Watts's workmen and write a description of the new journeyman printer from Philadelphia.

14. *Reference work:* For each of the following names mentioned by Franklin in connection with his life in London, consult encyclopædias and the Biographical Dictionary; then present, orally, or in writing, a brief account of the man's life, showing especially his residence, reputation at this time, and the personal reason Franklin had for interest in him, or his means of knowing the man.

a. Sir Hans Sloane.
b. Dr. Pemberton.
c. Dr. Mandeville.
d. Sir Isaac Newton.
e. Don Saltero.
f. Sir William Wyndham.

IV. Extracts from Franklin's Journal of a Voyage from London to Philadelphia, 1726

1. How long was this sea voyage, from the time of embarking to the day of reaching Philadelphia?

2. How many days of this voyage were spent in getting through the channel and out to open sea?

3. *Composition:*

Write, from this Journal, a paper on sea voyages in the early part of the eighteenth century, using present conditions of travel on the ocean as a means of comparison, and including in the little essay every particular which is different from the experience one would ordinarily have in crossing the ocean now.

Note. — Nearly one hundred years later another young American gentleman crossed from New York to Liverpool. There had been little change in the length of voyages in a century, and Irving experienced the same discomforts as Franklin in the long weeks on the ocean.

4. This Journal was written by Franklin simply for his own pleasure and remembrance, and when he was but twenty years old. Naturally, he had not yet the skill in composition that he attained in later life. Examine the Journal to find any incorrect or unpleasant sentences, and show whether you can improve them.

5. Rules of spelling and punctuation have changed greatly since 1726. Franklin's Journal is undoubtedly correct for that time, since he had just come from work in one of the best printing houses of London. Mark throughout this Journal everything that must be changed to modernize it in these respects.

6. *Habits of observation:*

Find all instances given in the Journal, of close observation of —

a. Places.

b. Natural phenomena.

c. Persons and habits.

7. What do you find in this Journal to prove whether, at this time, Franklin was eager to try experiments, or to learn new facts, or to find an explanation of things he did not understand?

8. If Franklin turned his observations and reflections into rules of guidance for his own conduct, find and write out such as would be made from the reflections, etc., recorded in this Journal.

9. Do you find in this Journal any information really new to you?

10. Find all descriptions of persons in this Journal. In which is Franklin best, in descriptions of personal appearance, or of disposition and character?

11. Which description of a place do you think is the best in composition?

Note. — A description of the castle at Carisbrooke for comparison will be found in the Encyclopædia, under Carisbrooke.

12. *Composition:* Write a description of Franklin at twenty, especially of his disposition, mind, and character, based wholly on this Journal.

13. *Composition:* Write a brief paper, showing the changes of mood and disposition that took place among the passengers as a result of the confinement, the tedium and delay of the voyage.

V. Public Appearance in Business

1. What changes affecting Franklin's life had taken place during his absence from Philadelphia?

2. How came Franklin to return to printing?

3. Was Franklin wise to fall in with Keimer's scheme after he had discovered it?

Note. — In discussing this question, for and against, ask what else he could have done.

4. *The men at Keimer's:*

a. In his description of the men in Keimer's shop, what does Franklin indirectly show about himself? What do you infer

about the young workmen in Philadelphia in regard to (1) birthplace, (2) education, (3) habits, (4) character?

b. If you were entirely free to choose, which one would you take for your friend? Which one would you choose as a partner?

5. *Manner of life established by Franklin:*

Give orally or in writing, under the following headings, an account of Franklin's manner of life at this time, and of the reasons for each part.

a. Business routine; character as a printer, etc.

b. Manner of living, friends, pleasures, etc.

c. Special interests, and plans.

d. Way of spending time out of business hours.

e. Causes of his leaving Keimer.

f. New plans, and partnership.

g. The importance of the trip to Burlington.

6. *Topic for oral composition, or written paper:*

Show in what way the experiences and training of Franklin's past had prepared him to succeed as printer and business man. Do you find indications of any marked change in Franklin about the time of his return from London? If so, explain in what the change lay, and the reasons for it.

7. *The Leather Apron Club, or Junto:*

a. What was Franklin's real reason for establishing the Junto?

b. Where did he get the idea of it?

c. What was his plan for the admission of members?

d. What was the main business of the club? How were questions chosen? What preparation for the discussions was made?

e. What does Franklin say of the influence of this club upon the young men who had belonged to it?

8. Explain what Franklin meant by "ingenious people."

9. Make an outline, as if of the plot of a story, of every step of advancement and success in business made by Franklin up to his marriage, and show how each was gained.

10. What business qualities did Franklin show in this period?

11. What affair in all this seems to you most trying and difficult to manage?

12. *Established in Business:*

When a young man begins for himself, his future usually depends, —

a. On his manner of conducting his business.

b. On the establishment of his credit.

c. On his ability to secure the confidence of other business men.

d. On the character of his intimate friends and the associations of his life.

e. On the position and influence he attains in the community. Included here must be his reputation, personal character, public spirit, intelligence.

13. In view of the above general statement write (or give orally) an account and estimate of Benjamin Franklin as a young business man, considering him at the time of his marriage, under the following topics:

a. What was his position and reputation in Philadelphia?

b. To what qualities, chiefly, did Franklin attribute his success in business?

c. What qualities won for him the confidence of his fellow citizens?

d. How and why did he choose his intimate friends after his return from Brooklyn? What sort of acquaintances did he seek?

e. How many of his early *errata* had he corrected?

14. Why did Franklin, in writing about his marriage at this time, say nothing about whether he could afford to marry?

VI. The Self-Made Man

1. *The Beginning of the Philadelphia Library:*

a. What was the first plan of the Junto for obtaining a library?

b. Give Franklin's plan for a subscription library, and tell how it was carried out. See note, p. 366.

c. What were Franklin's personal reasons for undertaking the business of starting the library?

2. Enumerate, as completely as you can, the secrets of Franklin's success in business; which of these had greatest immediate influence? Which had greatest importance in reference to the future?

3. *Franklin's plan for the formation of character:*

a. What faults or weaknesses led him to devise this plan of improving himself?

b. It is nearly two centuries since Franklin made this plan; the conditions of life have changed. The greatest temptations that beset a young man are not altogether the same now as then, and the virtues he needs, while the same, may some of them be practised more easily, and others with more difficulty, now; and new conditions certainly bring into play qualities of character not emphasized by Franklin.

Revise Franklin's list of virtues, if you think it necessary, to adapt it to the present time; or, add to the list, if it seems incomplete. Show the need of special effort to acquire any virtue you place in the list, by giving illustrations proving that life to-day leads a young person to neglect that practice.

c. What do you think of Franklin's method of acquiring a habit of virtue; that is, of fixing himself firmly in the practice of it? It seems to the editor of this text that hardly any young person, to-day, would really carry out this plan.

Devise some other plan for accomplishing the same result

which you think would be practicable for yourself and for other young people.

d. How long a time do you think it should take for establishing such a habit as "order," so that one could trust himself to practise it without special watchfulness?

4. *The Great Project:*

a. In brief, state what this project was.

b. Why did Franklin dwell so long in his *Autobiography* on a project which he never carried out?

c. Does it seem a practicable and useful scheme?

5. *The interruption in the writing of the Autobiography:*

a. How old was Franklin when he began the *Autobiography?* Where did he write it, thus far?

b. In what year did he resume the writing? How old was he? Where was he living?

6. *The Almanac:*

a. When and why was the Almanac begun?

b. Where did Franklin get the name of Poor Richard?

c. To what was the wonderful success of this Almanac due?

d. Collect as many proverbs, now in common use, as all students of the class together can find; mark in this collection all that you know to have been among Poor Richard's.

Note. — Any Life of Franklin will contain many of Poor Richard's proverbs, and the famous speech of Father Abraham, made up of them, has been reprinted so many times that copies of it are not difficult to find.

7. *Franklin's Conduct of a Newspaper:*

a. What was Franklin's idea of the objects to be fulfilled by a newspaper?

b. How did his paper differ from any that had before been published in Philadelphia?

c. Describe the business management by which Franklin increased the circulation of his paper.

8. *Franklin's study of languages:*

a. What study of language had Franklin in school?

b. Why did he wish to continue this study, and also acquire new languages? What difficulties must be overcome in order to do this?

c. What languages did he study?

d. Would the ability to read these languages be useful to him in his business?

e. How could he find time for these studies in addition to his business, his family, the junto, and the public projects in which he was interested?

9. *Return to Boston:*

a. How many times had Franklin visited Boston since he left it first?

b. What evidence can you find in the *Autobiography* that he had maintained an intimate connection with his family and relatives during his absence?

10. *Plan for enlarging the Junto:*

a. What had been the reason for the small number of members? For secrecy?

b. Explain the usefulness of the Junto, (1) to members; (2) in the community.

c. Explain the plan adopted for enlarging it. What was the weakness in this plan?

VII. The Self-Made Man, continued

1. What was Franklin's first public position? Did he regard it as an honor, or as a means of securing business?

2. What principle did he adopt in regard to persons opposed to him?

3. To what did Franklin attribute the offer made him by Colonel Spotswood?

4. What further advantages did this new position bring him?

5. How many years, now, had he been in business for himself?

6. *The City Watch:*

a. Describe the old plan and point out the defects and abuses of it.

b. Describe the new plan; — why should Franklin describe this effort of his when the plan was not adopted?

7. *The Union Fire Company:*

a. Describe the next project undertaken by Franklin.

b. Why should this undertaking meet with favor, at once, when no one had been ready to adopt the new plan proposed for a city watch?

Note. — In almost every community there are old persons who remember fire companies made up of men who joined for the mutual protection of their own property. If the story of some such old companies personally known can be obtained, relate them, and notice in how far the plan is the same as Franklin's.

8. *The Coming of George Whitefield:*

a. From encyclopædias, histories, etc., — get information for the story of Whitefield's life. Notice the remarkable qualities attributed to him by his biographers.

b. Why were the clergymen almost all hostile to Whitefield?

c. How came Franklin to be intimately acquainted with Whitefield?

d. Give Franklin's opinion of Whitefield, and of the secret of his power.

e. In this part of the biography is an account of an experiment made by Franklin to prove whether certain statements he had read in books could be true. Describe the experiment. Can you invent an experiment to prove how many persons could hear the sound of a boy's voice (of your own age); or, how many persons could hear the tick of a watch, at one time?

f. Why is this experiment extremely interesting in relation to Franklin himself?

VIII. Citizen of Philadelphia

1. What was Franklin's next scheme for the improvement of the city in which he lived?

Why did he presently drop the project?

2. *a.* What was the purpose of the proposal of a new society in Philadelphia?

b. Describe the plan and membership of the new society.

c. What has been the character and importance of this society since Franklin's death?

See notes, p. 373, and encyclopædias.

3. *A Plan of Defence:*

Note. — On this topic, consult histories of the Colonies.

a. To what special dangers was the colony of Pennsylvania exposed?

b. Why were there no means of defence in this colony?

c. How did Franklin undertake to overcome, or evade, the objections of the Quakers?

d. How often before had Franklin prepared the way for some new project by printing a pamphlet, or by advocating it in his paper?

Note. — This refers only to such instances as he mentions in the *Autobiography*. There were really many others.

e. Give the plan adopted, and show how it was carried out.

4. For what special reason was Franklin's activity in the matter of defence so pleasing to the Governor and Council?

5. *The Pennsylvania Fireplace:*

a. Learn from encyclopædias when the first stoves for heating were made anywhere.

b. Were there yet stoves for cooking?

c. Were churches heated?

d. Were bedrooms ever warmed, at night?

e. What credit is given Franklin for his inventions, in the books you consult?

6. *The Founding of the Academy:*

a. Show how Franklin prepared the way for a second attempt to open an Academy in Philadelphia.

b. How was the Academy started, and by what plan was it managed?

c. How was a building obtained for the Academy? What special agreement was signed by the trustees of the Academy in order to secure this building? How long was this agreement in force? See note, p. 375.

d. Give such an account as you can from books, catalogues, etc., of the great institution which has grown from the Academy founded by Franklin and his friends.

IX. Retired from Business, Burgess, Postmaster-General

1. At what age did Franklin retire from business?

2. How many years had he been in business for himself?

3. What sources of income had he after he retired? See notes, and Fisher's *True Benjamin Franklin*, pp. 162–163.

4. What were his reasons for retiring? What plans had he made for the remaining years of his life?

5. What Colonial war had just closed? Why was so little heard of the war in Philadelphia? (See school histories.)

6. *Commissioner to treat with the Indians:*

a. Had Franklin been sent, before this, on public business for the colony?

b. Why is his account of the Indians of special interest, now, when we have forgotten the treaty?

7. Make a list of all public offices and positions held by Franklin from the beginning, with his age at the time of each, and a reference to pages where you found the information.

Note. — This is an exercise in note-book work, and the paper handed in should have the appearance of a carefully written page in a note-book.

8. *Public Enterprises for the benefit of the community:*

a. How many public enterprises had Franklin already started, or promoted, in common with others?

b. The Pennsylvania Hospital:

(1) How did Franklin aid, personally, in founding the hospital?

(2) By what plan did he get a grant for the hospital through the assembly?

Note. — This device of Franklin's is especially interesting, because, in recent years, a similar plan of securing large sums of money has been practised by philanthropists.

(3) Show how this also was the beginning of an important institution which has continued to the present time. See note, p. 375, and encyclopædias.

c. The first street paving in Philadelphia:

(1) Describe Franklin's attempts to secure more comfortable streets, and the object lessons he gave for showing the improvement that would result.

(2) How long was it before anything was really accomplished? Was the plan when undertaken in any degree due to Franklin's efforts?

d. The beginning of lighting the streets:

(1) What was Franklin's device for keeping a clear light?

(2) What was burned in lamps at that time?

(3) How long after this was illuminating gas discovered?

e. Street cleaning:

What was Franklin's reason for telling here of experiments tried several years after, in London?

Note. — Franklin thought the most convenient place for a gutter to be in the middle of the street; this plan has since been entirely discarded.

9. *Becomes Postmaster-General:*

a. What previous events led to this appointment?

b. What were the difficulties for a postmaster to overcome in that day, if he would send mails regularly?

c. What improvements did Franklin introduce?

d. Who paid the expense of these improvements? Did Franklin receive a return for this public-spirited conduct?

See note on the Post-Office, p. 376.

e. When did Franklin inspect the post-offices? How must he travel? See map of Colonial post routes, p. 208.

10. *For the Note-book.* The degrees bestowed on Franklin, with dates.

11. What causes of war between England and France existed in 1754?

12. Where, geographically, were the Six Nations located? Give the tribes in order, from east to west.

13. Why were the English so desirous of arranging an alliance with the Six Nations before war was declared?

14. What colonies were represented at Albany?

15. Why was a plan of union suggested at this time?

16. What was Franklin's Plan of Union? Consult histories and compare the accounts given in them with what Franklin himself says. Give a brief outline of the plan.

17. Was Franklin's plan approved in his own state? What objections were made to it?

18. *The New Governor:*

a. Who sent out the governors for this colony?

b. How many governors, and who, have appeared in this *Autobiography?*

c. What was the real cause of quarrel between the Proprietaries and the colonists?

X. The "Dutche Advertisement" and the Frontier Forts

1. Where did Braddock land? Where did Franklin meet him?

2. What was Franklin's real errand to Braddock?

3. Why was it impossible to find wagons and horses enough in Virginia and Maryland to supply Braddock's need?

Note. — Consult the map for location of settlements and methods of travel in Virginia and Maryland; compare with the settlements and the means of travel in Pennsylvania.

4. Why was it important to capture Fort Duquesne early in this war?

5. Why was the colony of Pennsylvania especially interested in the capture of this fort?

6. Draw out in the brief form of proposal and agreements to be entered into, the plan for getting horses and wagons which Franklin undertook to carry out. Ought he to have risked his own fortune in so hazardous a venture? Was it necessary?

7. Three different persons warned Braddock about the danger of attack by the Indians. These were George Washington, Benjamin Franklin, George Croghan. What was the source of the knowledge of each?

8. *After Braddock's defeat,* —

a. What became of the army?

b. Who took Braddock's place as commander?

c. To whom must Franklin look for the money he had advanced for horses and for wagons?

9. *Colonel Franklin:*

a. How did Franklin manage to get the first permanent militia organization in the colonies started in a Quaker settlement where many opposed war on principle and refused to join in any plans for defence?

b. Show, on the map, where Franklin was sent, and explain why forts were needed here.

c. Give a brief account of how Franklin managed the business committed to his charge.

d. Give an account of the observations made by him on this expedition, on matters not military.

e. What illustrations of Franklin's character, or wit, do you find in this narrative?

XI. Experiments in Electricity

1. *Franklin as an experimenter:*

a. When did Franklin begin to experiment? Why?

b. Make from the *Autobiography* a list of all experiments you find mentioned; for each, note why the experiment was undertaken.

c. Find in the *Autobiography* as many illustrations as you can to prove whether Franklin was a close and careful observer.

d. Real experiments are undertaken to find out something that one does not know; what qualities best fit a man to experiment successfully?

e. Show what characteristics and what training Franklin had which specially fitted him to undertake experiments.

2. *Class exercise.* Let all write rapidly from memory for fifteen minutes on the topic, "Franklin's Experiments and Discoveries in Electricity," after which draw papers by lot to be read.

That paper will be best which —

a. Best shows Franklin's personal interest and success.

b. Is most orderly in its account of how he began and what he did.

c. Contains the clearest statements and the fullest detail.

A written paper of this kind should be packed full of real information, and every sentence should be interesting.

3. *Franklin's reputation to-day as a scientific man:*

Consult encyclopædias, biographies, books on science, whatever books may be in the school library to find what is said about Franklin on this point. Bring quotations, with references.

4. *A suggestion.*

In the second volume of Smyth's *Life and Writings of Benjamin Franklin* (pp. 328–32, 396–411, 454–56) are given several lists of simple experiments by which, in the very beginning, Franklin tried to learn something about the "electric fluid." These experiments are still to the point, and the directions are clearly given so that any boy who wishes can repeat them. A most useful exercise on this section of the *Autobiography* will be one in which the student repeats the experiment as described by Franklin and afterwards notes down his observations and what he thinks the experiment proves. When the *Writings* are not in an accessible library, students may still further imitate Franklin and invent from simple means their own experiments. There are, in almost every class, boys specially interested in electricity and already engaged in experimenting as a pastime. These will volunteer to present experiments which the rest of the class will note and report. Require, always, that the experimenter state before he begins his experiment, what he is going to do, and what he intends to prove or illustrate by it. These points are naturally suggested:

a. Experiments to show the usefulness of points in receiving or giving off electricity silently.

b. Experiments to prove that heat is produced by electricity, that it will melt wire, fuse metals, etc.

c. Experiments to prove the positive and negative theory of electricity.

d. Experiments to show that a slender metal rod, or wire, will conduct electricity long distances safely, to where it may be discharged into water, or used.

e. Many other simple experiments may be suggested designed to show something about the nature and uses of electricity.

5. *Later applications of principles discovered in Franklin's day.*

A class exercise. Let such applications as come easily to mind of any principle or use of electricity suggested in Franklin's studies be given by students of the class. Require, always, a simple clear statement of the use of electricity named. If possible, arrange the exercise with reference to uses of electricity most immediately familiar.

XII. Colonial Agent

1. What was Captain Denny's mission to Franklin?

2. What inducements did he offer? What was Franklin's answer?

3. For what reasons was Franklin selected to go to England as agent for the assembly, to arrange this quarrel with the Penn family?

4. What was his last act in the assembly before leaving? Why did he wish the resolutions adopted and the bill passed before he left?

5. Give an account of the delay in New York before Franklin sailed, and the causes of it.

Note. — Franklin wrote home, "This tedious state of uncertainty and long waiting has almost worn out my patience."

6. Consult school histories and present an outline of Loudon's part in the French and Indian war.

7. From the same sources prepare a character sketch of the general; compare Franklin's estimate of his character with what is said in the histories.

8. How was Loudon responsible for the loss of Fort George? See plan of campaign for 1757. If possible, consult Parkman's *Montcalm and Wolfe*.

9. *Composition: A story.*

Write the story of the wager about the sailing of the ship, with as much conversation as you can introduce. *Scene*, the ship; *Characters*, (1) the Captain of the Packet, (2) Captain Kennedy, a passenger who evidently thought that he knew all about sailing ships; (3) Benjamin Franklin, a rather stout gentleman of fifty-two; (4) his son William, a pleasant, fine-looking young man who made friends easily; and a companion of his, a boy about fifteen, very curious to know everything that went on, but likely to ask foolish questions, or to make remarks for his own amusement.

Remember that the chief part of the conversation must be between the two captains, but that Mr. Franklin probably understands the principles of sailing ships better than either of them. It will be well, also, if in his character of Poor Richard you can introduce several of his sayings. Be sure to describe his appearance and acts to the life, and when he speaks let it be in the old-fashioned, pleasant, direct way in which he wrote. That composition will be best which most makes the reader feel that he has seen Franklin and the two captains and heard them talk.

10. Where are the Scilly Isles?

11. Show how the currents between France and England run at this point. (See charts and maps of the currents in physical geographies, or in the Century Atlas.)

12. Franklin did not blame the captain of the ship, in his narrative, for the disaster by which the ship was so nearly lost. Would he be held responsible now? How was the ship saved?

13. Explain what Franklin meant when he said, "we were chased several times."

14. *The Business on which Franklin went to England:*

a. State exactly the position of the government of England toward the colonies as it was explained to Franklin. Illustrate this position by acts toward the colonies of which you learn in school histories.

b. On the other hand, what was the position of the colonists which Franklin had to defend? Illustrate this also by incidents, acts, resolutions, etc., found in histories.

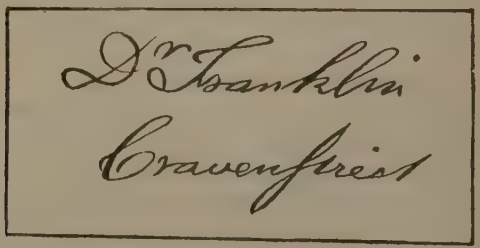
c. What special rights and privileges had been granted to the original proprietor of Pennsylvania?

d. What rights had he specially given over to the colonists who had settled within his boundaries?

e. What additional rights did the colonists claim? On what did they base their claim?

f. Had the proprietors ever been forced to yield to the assembly? Had the assembly at any time yielded to the proprietors?

g. State the case at issue between the Penn family and the colony of Pennsylvania at the time when Franklin was sent to England as colonial agent. Outline the negotiations which took place, as far as narrated here.



FRANKLIN'S CALLING CARD

NOTES

2.[1] Rev. Dr. Jonathan Shipley, Bishop of St. Asaph's, Wales, had a country place at Twyford, a village near Winchester, England. "The good bishop" was openly a friend of the American cause, and an intimate friendship arose between Franklin and the members of this family. Many letters in Franklin's published correspondence were addressed to the bishop's daughter Georgiana.

4. *Northamptonshire.* The ancestors of George Washington came from this same county. Many persons emigrated from the group of counties of which this is one; the greater number of these emigrants settled in the New England colonies. Ecton was twelve miles from Sulgrave, the home of the Washingtons.

5. The following extract from Franklin's account of his visit to the home of his ancestors, written to his wife in 1758, is more interesting than the brief statement he has made in the *Autobiography*.

"From Wellingborough we went to Ecton, about three or four miles, being the village where my father was born, and where his father, grandfather, and great grandfather had lived, and how many of the family before them we know not. We went first to see the old house and grounds; they came to Mr. Fisher with his wife, and, after letting them for some years, finding his rent something ill paid, he sold them. The land is now added to another farm, and a school is kept in the house. It is a decayed old stone building, but still known by the name of Franklin House. Thence we went to visit the rector of the parish, who lives close by the church, a very ancient building. He entertained us very kindly, and showed us the old church register, in which were the births, marriages, and burials of our ancestors for two hundred years, as early as his book began. His wife, a good-natured, chatty old lady, . . . entertained and diverted us highly

[1] The figures refer to pages of the text.

with stories of Thomas Franklin, Mrs. Fisher's father, who was a conveyancer, something of a lawyer, clerk of the county courts, and clerk to the Archdeacon in his visitations ; a very leading man in all county affairs, and much employed in public business. He set on foot a subscription for erecting chimes in their steeple, and completed it, and we heard them play. He found out an easy method of saving their village meadows from being drowned, as they used to be sometimes by the river, which method is still in being ; but, when first proposed, nobody could conceive how it could be; 'but, however,' they said, 'if Franklin says he knows how to do it, it will be done.' His advice and opinion were sought for on all occasions, by all sorts of people, and he was looked upon, she said, by some, as something of a conjuror. He died just four years before I was born, on the same day of the same month." S. III. 452.

6. *Old style.* The Calendar was reformed by Pope Gregory XIII in 1582, but on account of the Reformation England refused to change to the new style ; at length, in 1752, the change was made by dropping the excess of time, eleven days. When Franklin was born the old style of reckoning time was in use in the colonies. At the time of the change his birthday, January 6, old style, became January 17, new style, but the old day of the month had become fixed in his mind and he sometimes said that he felt as if he must have had two birthdays.

7. *Outed.* Deprived of positions in the Church of England for refusal to use the prayer book and to conform.

9. *The grammar school*, so called because Latin grammar was taught in it. Franklin expressed in his will his feeling of indebtedness to this school, in token of which he gave one hundred pounds to the city of Boston. This money was to be put out at interest, and the income to be used each year to purchase silver medals to be given as prizes to children of the public schools of the city.

11. "*Learnt early to swim well.*" In a letter in 1773 Franklin wrote : —

"You will not be displeased if I conclude these hasty remarks by informing you, that the ordinary method of swimming is reduced to the act of rowing with the arms and legs, and is consequently a laborious and fatiguing operation when the space of water to be crossed

is considerable ; there is a method in which a swimmer may pass to great distances with much facility, by means of a sail. This discovery I fortunately made by accident, and in the following manner.

"When I was a boy, I amused myself one day with flying a paper kite; and approaching the bank of a pond, which was near a mile broad, I tied the string to a stake, and the kite ascended to a very considerable height above the pond, while I was swimming. In a little time, being desirous of amusing myself with my kite, and enjoying at the same time the pleasure of swimming, I returned ; and, loosing from the stake the string with the little stick which was fastened to it, went again into the water, where I found that, lying on my back and holding the stick in my hands, I was drawn along the surface of the water in a very agreeable manner. Having then engaged another boy to carry my clothes round the pond to a place I pointed out to him on the other side, I began to cross the pond with my kite, which carried me quite over without the least fatigue and with the greatest pleasure imaginable. I was only obliged occasionally to halt a little in my course, and resist its progress, when it appeared that, by following too quick, I lowered the kite too much ; by doing which I occasionally made it rise again. I have never since that time practiced this singular mode of swimming, though I think it not impossible to cross in this manner from Dover to Calais. The packet-boat, however, is still preferable." S. V. 545.

13. The grave of Franklin's parents is in the Old Granary Burying Ground on Tremont Street, Boston. When the stone erected by Franklin decayed, it was replaced by a permanent monument erected in 1827 by the citizens of Boston. Under the corner-stone was deposited a silver plate bearing this inscription : "This monument was erected over the Remains of the Parents of Benjamin Franklin by the Citizens of Boston, from Respect to the Private character and Public services of this Illustrious Patriot and Philosopher, and for the many Tokens of his Affectionate Attachment to his native Town."

The inscription written by Franklin was carefully reëngraved on the new monument. Beneath it are the lines printed on the following page: —

THE MARBLE TABLET,
BEARING THE ABOVE INSCRIPTION,
HAVING BEEN DILAPIDATED BY THE RAVAGES OF TIME,
A NUMBER OF CITIZENS,
ENTERTAINING THE MOST PROFOUND VENERATION
FOR THE MEMORY OF THE ILLUSTRIOUS

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN,

AND DESIROUS OF REMINDING SUCCEEDING GENERATIONS,
THAT HE WAS BORN IN BOSTON, A. D. MDCCVI,
ERECTED THIS
OBELISK
OVER THE GRAVES OF HIS PARENTS.
MDCCCXXVII.

15. Chapmen were itinerant dealers; in the nineteenth century the word *chap-book* was coined and applied to pamphlets and other small books such as were carried by these men.

15. The *Essay on Projects*, published in 1698, is full of ingenious or brilliant suggestions. Some of the topics discussed are friendly and insurance societies, high schools for women, military academies, and idiot asylums. It is easy to see that such an essay would set the young Franklin to considering the management and usefulness of public institutions. He was probably much indebted to Defoe for those practical ideas which made him so useful a citizen.

22. *The Art of Thinking*, the famous Port Royal Logic, was a remarkable educational work written by teachers in the Port Royal school, near Paris. It taught the art of clear and convincing exposition. It is noteworthy that Franklin, before his sixteenth year, chose of his own accord to study two books so difficult, dry, and long as *The Human Understanding* and *The Art of Thinking*.

26. The opponents of inoculation for small-pox chose James Franklin's paper as their organ. For this reason, the Mathers became deeply incensed with the *New England Courant* and its editor. The well-known character of the paper for irreverent satire, jests, nonsense, and extreme views invited the bitter invective of Increase Mather, who publicly declared his "pity for poor Franklin who, tho'

but a young man, it may be speedily he must appear before the Judgment seat of God."

Partisan feeling ran so high that the matter of inoculation got into the General Court, and a little later the Court construed an article published in the *Courant* on an entirely different subject as contempt and committed its publisher to prison, as Franklin narrates. (See Notes, p. 372.)

30. William Bradford had set up the third printing press in the colonies in Philadelphia in 1685. He became involved in the quarrel between Keith and the authorities, and for printing Keith's "Appeal to the People," he was arrested, and his press was confiscated. He thereupon removed to New York, where he lived until 1752. His son, however, remained in Philadelphia.

38. *French prophet.* This name was probably derived from the members of a fanatical sect of Jansenists, which arose at Paris. These persons indulged in violent contortions of the body, and prophesied. The teachers of the Camisards, a religious sect of the Cévennes, also were called prophets, and indulged in similar manifestations of wild religious emotion. Louis XIV ordered the extermination of the Camisard heresy in 1715, and the survivors of this persecuted people fled to other countries. Stevenson, in *Travels with a Donkey*, tells of his journey through the country of the Camisards and, indirectly, shows how much he had been interested in their sad story.

40. *Both Governments.* The Duke of York had sold the Delaware Counties to William Penn, but the colonists who had settled there denied his right to do so, and at length obtained from Penn the concession of a separate home government, under the governor and council of Pennsylvania. This separation had taken place a few years before Franklin went to Philadelphia.

41. *Raree-show.* A peep show, carried about in a box.

60. *Little Britain.* This is the same famous district of London, not far from St. Paul's Church, on the one side, or from London Bridge on the other, of which Washington Irving was so fond in a later time.

63. *Sir Hans Sloane* was a famous physician who, as a young man, had gone to Jamaica as medical attendant to the governor. While there, he made a great collection of plants, minerals, and

other objects. At the time of Franklin's residence in London he was one of the most eminent men in Great Britain. After his death in 1753, in accordance with his will, his wonderful collections of botany and natural history, and his library, were sold to the nation; and they formed the beginning of the British Museum. It is a significant indication of the intelligence of Ben Franklin that at the age of nineteen he knew Sir Hans Sloane by reputation.

64. *Watts's printing house.* — Ford says that Franklin always attributed his knowledge of good book-making to his experience in Watts's printing house. It is stated that "at every entertainment which he gave his workmen during the life of Watts, the health of his old friend and master was one of the toasts." Watts's press (see p. 65), at which Franklin worked, is now in the Patent Office in Washington. William Strahan, Franklin's life-long friend, was once a journeyman printer at Watts's.

66. *Chapel and Chapel Ghost.* Chapel was commonly used as the designation of a printing office, or of the body of workmen who were associated in it. This custom probably originated in the location of the first printing office in London within the precincts of Westminster Abbey and near an old chapel. See Morley's *English Writers*, vol. iii, p. 324.

69. "*The College.*" The hospital was built on the site of "Chelsea College," begun in the time of James I, but later given up.

69. *Don Saltero.* James Salter had formerly been the valet of Sir Hans Sloane, from whom he had many curiosities. "His house, a barber-shop, was known as 'Don Saltero's coffee house' and was a favorite lounge for Sloane and Oldham. The curiosities were in glass cases and constituted an amazing and motley collection — a petrified crab from China, a 'lignified hog,' Job's tears, Madagascar lances, William the Conqueror's flaming sword, and Henry the Eighth's coat of mail." Don Saltero was described by Steele in the *Tatler*, No. 34. From note by Smyth in his edition of Franklin's *Autobiography*, in *Writings*, I. 285.

76. *In the Queen's time.* That is, in Queen Anne's reign. Sir John Gibson was lieutenant governor of Portsmouth for eighteen years. He had died in 1717, a time so recent that many stories of him were still current in the garrison.

77. *Carisbrooke.* An account of this place that well corresponds with Franklin's *Journal*, is given in the *Encyclopædia Britannica.*

80. *Cadogan. Webb.* These generals were engaged in the wars of Queen Anne's reign, in company with the Duke of Marlborough. Both figure in a familiar incident in Thackeray's novel, *Henry Esmond*, chap. xv, book ii.

91. *Ship load of servants.* Many prisoners of war, paupers, and prisoners for debt were shipped to the colonies where they were sold for a limited period of time. The money paid for them went to the repayment of the cost of sending them out, or to the profit of the company.

114. *The Busy Body Papers* are reprinted in S. II. 100–132. The editor affirms that they were undertaken for the purpose of wrecking Keimer's paper. The Busy Body Papers were well written; they discuss common affairs in the vein of mingled humor and plain sense which later insured Franklin's success as an editor. He devised correspondents whose letters he answered; he invited communications from others, saying, "It will be hard if we cannot muster up in the whole community a sufficient stock of sense to supply the Busy Body for a twelvemonth." Every one understood the reference to Keimer's columns, which were reprinted from the *Universal Dictionary.* Some of the Papers were in the vein of Poor Richard. This was a sort of pleasant humor not often met with in the colonies in 1729. Readers of the Busy Body Papers were quite prepared to welcome Franklin as an editor when he began to publish the *Gazette.*

114. *The Pennsylvania Gazette.* Keimer's paper was predestined to fail. The name, *The Universal Instructor in all the Arts and Sciences and the Pennsylvania Gazette*, was quite enough. But beside this, Keimer borrowed his instruction, as well as part of the name, from Chambers' *Universal Dictionary of all the Arts and Sciences*, articles from which were republished in order, alphabetically. Franklin at once cut down the long name to the *Pennsylvania Gazette.* In the preface to the first number after the transfer he announced that he had taken a view of "Chambers' great Dictionaries" and found that it "will probably be fifty years before the whole can be gone through" with, also that articles closely related

in meaning appear under different letters of the alphabet and are likely therefore to be separated by an interval of several years. He concludes, therefore, "that such a method of communicating knowledge is not the proper one." Preface to the *Pennsylvania Gazette*, October 2, 1729. S. II. 155.

115. *Burnet* had recently become governor of the Massachusetts Colony. The General Court voted him a generous salary, £1700, but for one year only. The governor demanded a vote which would provide a fixed annual salary for a number of years. The General Court was firm in its determination to renew the grant each year, thus retaining a means of control over the conduct of the governor. This dispute excited intense interest in all the other colonies, for the question was one of principle and each Province had its own difficulties with royal governors. This very quarrel was one chief influence in creating the hostility to Great Britain which at length precipitated the war for independence.

119. *An anonymous pamphlet.* Franklin overestimated the importance of his own performance in this pamphlet. It certainly was remarkably well-written for a boy of twenty-three, but it was filled with misleading ideas on the money question. Undoubtedly the colonists suffered greatly from a deficiency in the circulating medium, as Franklin thought; but his education and experience were both, as yet, too limited for him to be able to present sound ideas on this difficult subject.

134. *The Philadelphia Library.* The amount given by these young workingmen would be equivalent to a much larger sum in the currency of the present day. It was five months before the necessary money from the subscribers could be provided and a list of books ordered from London. The cost of this first order was £45. The volumes were placed, in 1732, in a small room in a private house, at that time used by the Junto for its meetings. Franklin himself acted as librarian, opening the library for an hour or two at a time, on certain days in the week. The library proved a great success; donations of books, curiosities, and money were received.

In 1740 the library was removed to the new State House, and in 1773 it was taken from there to Carpenters' Hall. In 1790 it was housed in a newly erected library building. When the corner-stone

of this building was laid in 1787, Franklin was too infirm to attend the ceremonies, but, at the request of the Directors of the Library Company, he prepared an inscription to be placed on the stone. Birch's view (page 135) shows this building with the statue of Franklin above the entrance. Nearly one hundred years later, in 1880, this building was replaced by the present Philadelphia Library. The original stone bearing the inscription is set in the north wall of the building. In the library some of the original books of the Junto Club are preserved.

The inscription as written by Franklin was: —

BE IT REMEMBERED,
IN HONOUR OF THE PHILADELPHIAN YOUTH,
(THEN CHIEFLY ARTIFICERS)
THAT IN MDCCXXXII,
THEY CHEERFULLY, AT THE INSTANCE OF ONE OF THEIR NUMBER,
INSTITUTED THE PHILADELPHIA LIBRARY,
WHICH THO' SMALL AT FIRST
IS BECOME HIGHLY VALUABLE,
AND EXTENSIVELY USEFUL;
AND WHICH THE WALLS OF THIS EDIFICE
ARE NOW DESTINED TO CONTAIN AND PRESERVE.
THE FIRST STONE OF WHOSE FOUNDATION
WAS HERE PLACED
THE 31ST DAY OF AUGUST,
MDCCXXXIX.

The directors of the Library Company felt that Franklin's modest anonymous reference to himself would fail of satisfying his fellow-citizens. They therefore, with his consent, rearranged one line of this inscription by inserting his name, and thus it was engraved: —

AT THE INSTANCE OF BENJAMIN FRANKLIN,
ONE OF THEIR NUMBER.

See *Benjamin Franklin and the University of Pennsylvania*, edited by F. N. Thorpe, for the Bureau of Education, Washington.

136. *Franklin's tribute to his wife.* In 1755, Franklin wrote to

Mrs. Catherine Greene, one of his young friends, recently married, as follows: —

. . . "The cheeses, particularly one of them, were excellent. All our friends have tasted it, and all agree that it exceeds any English cheese they ever tasted. Mrs. Franklin was very proud that a young lady should have so much regard for her old husband, as to send him such a present. . . . She is sure you are a sensible girl and a notable housewife, and talks of bequeathing me to you as a legacy; but I ought to wish you a better, and hope she will live these hundred years; for we are grown old together, and if she has any faults, I am so used to 'em that I don't perceive 'em, as the song says,

> "Some faults we have all, and so has my Joan,
> But then they 're exceedingly small;
> And, now I am used, they are like my own,
> I scarcely can see 'em at all,
> My dear friends,
> I scarcely can see 'em at all."

139. *Articles of Belief and Acts of Religion* is one of the most remarkable papers ever penned by a young man of twenty-two. The "Articles of Belief," in manuscript, were Franklin's daily companion to the end of his life. The original manuscript is now in the library of Congress. On the title-page was this stanza: —

> Here will I hold. If there is a power above us,
> (And that there is all Nature cries aloud,
> Thro' all her Works) He must delight in Virtue;
> And that which he delights in must be Happy.[1]
>
> — Cato.

154. In a letter to Ezra Stiles, written in Philadelphia, March 9, 1790, Franklin said: —

"You desire to know something of my Religion. It is the first time I have been questioned upon it. But I cannot take your curiosity amiss and shall endeavour in a few words to gratify it. Here is my Creed. I believe in one God, Creator of the Universe. That he governs it by his Providence. That he ought to be worshiped. That the most acceptable service we render to him is doing

[1] See S. II. 91–100.

good to his other Children. That the soul of Man is immortal, and will be treated with Justice in another Life respecting its Conduct in this. These I take to be the fundamental Principles of all sound Religion, and I regard them as you do in whatever sect I meet with them. . . .

"I shall only add, respecting myself, that having experienced the Goodness of that Being in conducting me prosperously thro' a long life, I have no doubt of its continuance in the next, though without the smallest conceit of meriting such goodness." — S. X. 83–4.

156. *Poor Richard's Almanac.* The calculations and manuscript for the almanac were to have been prepared by Thomas Godfrey, the father of the girl whom Franklin courted but did not marry. When the match was broken off Godfrey gave his predictions and manuscript to another printer. Upon this Franklin was forced to write his own almanac; but desiring to gain credit for his sayings and forecasts, he adopted the name of an almanac maker of the seventeenth century, Richard Saunders. The book soon came to be called "Poor Richard's Almanack." Each number was begun by a humorous address to the "Kind Reader"; these annual prefaces are reprinted in editions of Franklin's writings. The popularity of Poor Richard's Almanac was due to the humor which pervaded every part of it, and to the mingling of sense and wit in the shrewd sayings interspersed on every page. In the preface to Poor Richard, 1739, Franklin has very well described the character of his own production.

He says: "Besides the usual things expected in an almanack, I hope the professed teachers of Mankind will excuse my scattering here and there some instructive hints in matters of morality and Religion. And be not thou disturbed, O grave and sober Reader, if among the many sentences in my Book, thou findest me trifling now and then and talking idly. In all the Dishes I have hitherto cooked for thee, there is solid Meat enough for thy Money. There are Scraps from the Table of Wisdom, that will if well digested, yield strong Nourishment to thy Mind. But squeamish stomachs cannot eat without Pickles; which, 't is true are good for nothing else, but they provoke an appetite. The vain youth that reads my Almanack for the sake of an idle Joke, will perhaps meet with a serious Reflection, that he may ever after be the better for."

The following [1] from the Almanacs of 1739 and 1742, illustrate Poor Richard's vein, both in foolish and in wise humor: —

Of the DISEASES This Year

This year the Stone-blind shall see but very little; the Deaf shall hear but poorly; and the Dumb sha'n't speak very plain. And it's much, if my Dame Bridget talks at all this Year.

Whole Flocks, Herds, and Droves of Sheep, Swine and Oxen, Cocks and Hens, Ducks and Drakes, Geese and Ganders shall go to Pot; but the Mortality will not be altogether so great among Cats, Dogs, and Horses. As for old Age, 't will be incurable this Year, because of the Years past. And towards the Fall some people will be seiz'd with an unaccountable Inclination to roast and eat their own Ears.

Of the FRUITS of the EARTH

I find that this will be a plentiful Year of all manner of good Things, to those who have enough; but the Orange Trees in Greenland, will go near to fare the worse for the Cold. As for Oats, they 'll be a great Help to Horses. I dare say there won't be much more Bacon than Swine. Mercury somewhat threatens our Parsley-beds, yet Parsly will be to be had for Money. Hemp will grow faster than the Children of this Age, and some will find there 's but too much on 't. As for Corn, Fruit, Cyder, and Turnips, there never was such Plenty as will be now; if poor Folks may have their Wish.

Rules of Health and Long Life

Eat and drink such an exact Quantity as the Constitution of thy Body allows of, in reference to the Services of the Mind.

They that study much, ought not to eat so much as those that work hard, their Digestion being not so good.

The exact Quantity and Quality, being found out, is to be kept to constantly.

Excess in all other Things whatever, as well as in Meat and Drink, is also to be avoided.

[1] See S. II. 220–1, 227.

Youth, Age, and Sick, require a different Quantity.

And so do those of contrary Complexions; for that which is too much for a phlegmatick Man, is not sufficient for a Cholerick.

156. *A connected discourse prefixed to the Almanac of 1757.* At length, in 1757, being assured of the popularity and usefulness of Poor Richard's sayings, Franklin hit upon a device for weaving them into a connected discourse. In the preface he narrates gravely how at one time, on a journey, he (in the character of Richard Saunders) approached a Vendue (an auction, or fair) of merchants' goods. "The hour of sale not being come," he continues, "they were conversing on the Badness of the Times and one of the company call'd to a plain clean old Man, with white Locks, 'Pray, Father Abraham, what think you of the Times? Won't these heavy Taxes quite ruin the Country? How shall we ever be able to pay them? What would you advise us to?' Father *Abraham* stood up, and reply'd, 'If you'd have my Advice, I'll give it you in short, for *A Word to the Wise is enough*, and *many Words won't fill a Bushell*, as *Poor Richard* says.' They join'd in desiring him to speak his Mind, and gathering round him, he proceeded as follows": —

After this followed a discourse of many paragraphs on the "Way to Wealth," for the most part made up of the precepts and reflections of Poor Richard. This long address concludes in these words: "*Experience keeps a dear school, but Fools will learn in no other, and scarce in that*, for it is true, *we may give Advice, but we cannot give Conduct*, as *Poor Richard* says: However, remember this, *They that won't be counselled, can't be helped*, as *Poor Richard* says: and farther, That, *if you will not hear Reason, she'll surely rap your Knuckles.*" "Thus the old Gentleman ended his Harangue. The People heard it, and approved the Doctrine, and immediately practiced, just as if it had been a common Sermon."

The listener, Richard Saunders, in person, is represented as riding away with many reflections on what he had seen and heard and conscious, he tells us, "that not a tenth part of the Wisdom ascribed to him was his own, but rather the *gleanings* he had made of the sense of all Ages and Nations." — S. III. 418.

Of this pamphlet Ford says: "It is this preface which has given

the name of Poor Richard currency in alien races and a quotable quality to this day. It has been printed and reprinted again and again . . . under the titles of 'Father Abraham's Speech,' 'The Way to Wealth,' and 'La Science du Bonhomme Richard,' it has proved itself one of the most popular American writings. Seventy-five editions of it have been printed in English, fifty-six in French, eleven in German, and nine in Italian. It has been translated into Spanish, Danish, Swedish, Welsh, Polish, Gaelic, Russian, Bohemian, Dutch, Catalan, Chinese, modern Greek, and phonetic writing. It has been printed at least four hundred times, and is to-day as popular as ever." — *The Many-Sided Franklin*, p. 407.

163 *Inoculation* as a method of preventing small-pox was introduced in Europe from the Chinese early in the eighteenth century, but the practice did not begin in England until 1722. In that year a famous lady, Mary Wortley Montagu, who had resided in Constantinople with her husband, the English ambassador, caused her daughter to undergo the operation. In 1721, a year earlier, Dr. Boylston first practiced it in this country, in Boston. In the controversy that arose about the practice of inoculation James Franklin and his brother had become involved. (See Notes, p. 362.)

Epidemics of small-pox were frequent, and many died of this dreadful disease. In a letter Franklin mentions that of eight hundred persons inoculated in twenty-two years, in which there had been five visitations of small-pox, but four had died.

169. *Whitefield.* In 1739, this famous preacher was but twenty-five years old and at the beginning of his career. He visited America seven times, and on the last visit, in 1770, died at Newburyport, in Massachusetts. Franklin's account of his personality and remarkable influence is far below the representation given by the biographers of his later years. One of these writes : —

"Whitefield's dramatic power was amazing. 'Aye, sure,' said an old man who heard him, 'he was a jolly brave man; and what a look he had as he put out his right hand to rebuke a disturber who tried to stop him under a pear tree.' The man had been threatening and noisy, but he could not stand the look. Off he rode and Whitefield said, 'There he goes : empty barrels make most din. His voice was marvellously varied, and he ever had it at command

— an organ, a flute, a harp, all in one. His intellectual powers were not of high order, but he had an abundance of that ready talent which makes the popular preacher; and beyond all natural endowments there was in his ministry the power of evangelical truth and, as his converts believed, the presence of the spirit of God."

Whitefield preached from the balcony of the Loxley house (see p. 173) on his sixth or seventh visit to America. The great meeting house built for his use through Franklin's efforts had at this time been taken for the use of the Pennsylvania Academy. The fame of his oratory now drew audiences far beyond the capacity of any building in the colonies.

171. *The Colony in Georgia.* The founder of the new colony in Georgia, Oglethorpe, was a philanthropist who had become much interested in prisoners held for debt. According to the law of England at that time, persons who were unable to pay their debts might be arrested and sent to prison, where they were kept in idleness unless some one appeared to pay the debt for them. Oglethorpe wished to give these persons a chance to begin life anew in the colonies, and many such had been released from jail and transported to Georgia. But as most of them knew nothing about the cultivation of land, they proved poor colonists. Very many also were inefficient, helpless persons who had fallen into difficulties for lack of those habits of industry and frugality most essential in a new country.

178. *The Philosophical Society.* This is the very brief and modest record of one of the great acts of Franklin's life. The paper referred to was printed in 1743. It was entitled "A Proposal for Promoting Useful Knowledge among the British Plantations in America," and presented a plan by which learned and scientific men might come into communication with each other through membership in a society centrally located in Philadelphia.

The members of the central society were to meet once a month, or oftener, "to communicate to each other their observations and experiments and receive, read, and consider . . ." communications from distant members. The printing and distribution of valuable communications was contemplated from the beginning. The scientific character of this society was determined by the requirement that there should always be among the members in Philadelphia a physi-

cian, a botanist, a mathematician, a chemist, a mechanician, a geographer, and a general natural philosopher, beside the usual officers. The subjects of correspondence were to include every sort of knowledge having a practical bearing on the development of a new country or the welfare of its inhabitants, — roads, the breeding of animals, chemistry, etc., etc., "and all philosophical experiments that let light into the nature of things, tend to increase the power of man over matter, and multiply the conveniences or pleasures of life."

179. *Plain Truth.* It was Franklin's habit in promoting projects first to present and to distribute widely a printed statement of the plan, with reasons for its usefulness and answers to probable objections. This insured a correct understanding of the plan and a fair consideration of its advantages before any had declared opposition to the new idea. He has recorded in the *Autobiography* many instances in which he by this means aroused interest and convinced the public of the desirability of the enterprise before it was taken in hand. One well-known historian in describing the plans for defence adopted at this time by the city of Philadelphia, in opposition to the vote of the assembly, has said, "*Plain Truth*, a little pamphlet written by Franklin, greatly contributed to these movements."

188. *The Pennsylvania Fireplace.* "An Account of the new-invented Pennsylvania Fireplaces" was a pamphlet which, reprinted, occupies thirty pages in Smyth's edition of Franklin's writings. In it Franklin describes minutely the plan and working of the fireplace, with drawings of all the parts. He even gives directions for bricklayers who would build them, tells how wood should be cut, the fire started and managed. He presents also many arguments for the healthfulness and economy of the device and answers the objections of conservative persons. The diagram given on page 193 will explain itself to any school boy, in this age of mechanical ingenuity, when every one is familiar from childhood with devices unthought of by the wisest in Franklin's day.

The fame of this invention spread throughout Europe, and when Dr. Franklin went abroad he was even called in by friends in those parts as a doctor of "smoaky chimneys." The model of the fireplace, now in the Smithsonian Institution, clearly suggests the beginning of stoves. Later in his life, Franklin published a pamphlet with draw-

ings showing a new kind of stove for burning pit coal. The Franklin stove, or open fireplace, is still in common use.

This brief and simple account in the *Autobiography* of a very useful invention is another instance of Franklin's modesty in regard to his scientific achievements. He never considered himself a thoroughly trained or educated man in comparison with European scholars, although they were ever ready to honor his attainments and the superiority of his intelligence.

189. *The Pennsylvania Academy.* The Bureau of Education at Washington, in 1892, published a very interesting Bulletin on "Franklin and the University of Pennsylvania." In one respect, the history of the growth of this institution is especially instructive. Franklin foresaw the need, in this new country, of a more practical education than any at that time given in the colleges of Europe, or of New England. He took the greatest pains to provide in the original plan for the study of English and other practical subjects, placing the teacher of English composition and literature in the same class, in rank and salary, with teachers of the classics and mathematics. But necessarily, in that day, every man of sufficient scholarship and culture to be at the head of an academy or college had been trained in some one of the old institutions which gave the first place to study of the classics. Very soon these instructors began to shape the new college on the model of the older ones and the intention of Franklin and his friends was lost sight of. Toward the end of his life Franklin wrote a long paper on the "Intentions of the Original Founders of the Academy," in which he set forth in detail the original purpose of providing for the youth of Pennsylvania an English master who should give instruction in all the sciences, teach "the English tongue grammatically and as a language." Something very like the State institutions of our own time seems to have been in Franklin's mind. Bureau of Education, Circular No. 2, 1892, and S. IX. 9.

198. *The hospital.* In 1765, the trustees of the Philadelphia College voted to establish a "professorship of the theory and practice of physic." This was the beginning of the Medical College of the University of Pennsylvania, and the hospital which Franklin had helped to found continued to be the hospital of that school until 1874. A historian of the University of Pennsylvania describes the old Penn-

sylvania hospital as "the most ancient in America, and for fifty years the best appointed in the world."

Franklin had become greatly interested in the study of medicine, which he pursued in his own way throughout his life. Many of his best correspondents in Europe were physicians; he was made a member of several medical societies in Europe and many of his intimate friends were physicians who were also deeply interested in science; Dr. Pringle, physician to the Queen of England, and Dr. Ingenhousz of Vienna were notable medical men with whom Franklin exchanged frequent letters, and the first of these was often his traveling companion.

208. *Post routes in the Colonies.* Moll's map of post routes in the colonies was published in 1729 and is the only official map of post routes in America previous to the war for independence, which has been preserved. The maps appended to Franklin's reports in 1753 and in 1764 were detached and cannot be found. The following account of the routes corresponds with the date of the map.

"AN ACCOUNT OF Y^E^ POST OF Y^E^ CONTINENT OF N^TH^ AMERICA AS THEY ARE REGULATED BY Y^E^ POSTMASTERS GEN'^L^ OF Y^E^ POST HOUSE.

"The western Post sets out from Philadelphia every Friday leaving letters at Burlington and Perth Amboy and arrives at New York on Sunday night; the distance between Philadelphia and New York being 206 Miles. The Post goes out eastward every Monday morning from New York, and arrives at Seabrook Thursday noon; being 150 Miles, where the Post from Boston sets out at the same time; The New York Post returning with the Eastern Letters, and the Boston Post with the Western. Bags are dropt at New London, Stoningham, Rhode Island, and Bristol. The Post from Boston to Piscataway being 70 Miles leaves letters at Ipswich, Salem, Marblehead, and Newberry. There are offices kept at Burlington and Perth Amboy in New Jersey, New London, and Stonington in Connecticott, at Rhode Island, Bristol, Ipswich, Salem, Marblehead, and Newberry, and the three great offices are at Boston, New York, and Philadelphia."

These routes were maintained for many years, with little change except in places where the opening of new roads offered a speedier and safer way for the Post.

The beginning of regular posts in the colonies was in 1692, when Andrew Hamilton, Governor of East Jersey, was given authority to carry out a recent patent for that purpose. He established a weekly mail from the "Piscataways" to Philadelphia. The British Post-Office Act of 1711 included the colonies and established the office of Deputy Postmaster-General for America. The post-riders at first followed the shore line from Boston to New York. From Philadelphia to New York the route was beset with difficulties. The roads were rough, the country was sparsely inhabited, inns were poor and infrequent. There were many streams to cross by ferry, and the Post was often long delayed by high winds or floating ice that made the waters impassable.

208. *Franklin's term of office as Postmaster-General.* It is charged that Franklin asked for the office of postmaster-general and urged his friends to use their influence to obtain it for him; also, that when appointed he used his position for the profit of many friends and relatives. Both statements are true, but other circumstances should not be forgotten. At the time when Franklin wished to receive the appointment, the post-office in America had never returned a profit, and undoubtedly Franklin had in mind the improvement of the service as a benefit to his country when he sought the position. He at once undertook to reform and improve the service. At the end of three years, not only had he received no salary, but he had paid out £678 7*s.* 2*d.* more than the total receipts. In the fourth year, the deficit was more than £265 additional. Later Franklin and his colleague were able to repay themselves and at the end of eight years a remittance of £49 44*s.* 8*d.* profit, above all expenses, was sent to the home office in London. These remittances continued, to the great surprise of the Postmaster-General in England, who informed the Lords of the Treasury that "the Posts in America were under the management of persons of acknowledged ability."

After the signing of the Declaration of Independence Franklin was made Postmaster-General by the Continental Congress, and in 1783, after the signing of the treaty, it was with Franklin that the

General Post-Office, London, resumed correspondence in regard to mail service between the two countries. Franklin was not, however, at that time postmaster. Congress objected to his continuing in the office during his absence in France and took it from him.

208. *Reforms in postal service instituted by Franklin.* Soon after receiving his appointment, Franklin, according to his habit, set out on a tour of inspection to learn the exact state of the postal service. He visited every post-office except Charleston, S. C. The reforms immediately undertaken may be summarized as follows:—

He straightened routes, and thus saved time.

He forced Post-riders to hasten.

He transmitted by mail all newspapers without discrimination.

He established a penny post in large cities.

He first advertised unclaimed letters.

He increased the frequency of mails between New York and Philadelphia, —

In summer, from once a week to three times a week.

In winter, from twice a month to once a week.

Authorities consulted: McMaster's *Benjamin Franklin*, Smyth's *Life and Writings of Benjamin Franklin*, and *The History of the Post-Office*, by Herbert Joyce.

211. *Governor Shirley.* Among the writings of Franklin are three letters to Governor Shirley on the taxation of the American Colonies; they were written in December, 1754, and doubtless contain the substance of the conversations to which Franklin refers. Mr. John Adams said that when Franklin was in Boston in 1754, Shirley communicated to him as a profound secret "the great design of taxing the colonies by act of Parliament." Franklin sent the governor an answer in writing, entitled, "On the Imposition of Direct Taxes upon the Colonies without their consent."

The calmness, dignity, and justice of the observations in this remarkable letter entitle it to a place among the noblest State papers of the period preceding the war for independence. Shirley had confided in Franklin with the purpose of securing the aid of an influential man in carrying through the project. The result was the opposite of what he intended.

Letters reprinted in S. III. 232–7.

232. The following extract from a letter to the secretary of state, written by General Braddock, June 5, at Wills' Creek, was afterwards found among the State papers in London. It pays Franklin the tribute he deserved.

"Before I left Williamsburgh, the Quarter-Master General told me that I might depend upon twenty-five hundred horses and two hundred wagons from Virginia and Maryland; but I had great reason to doubt it, having experienced the false dealings in all of this country with whom I had been concerned. Hence, before my departure from Frederick, I agreed with Mr. Benjamin Franklin, Postmaster, in Pennsylvania, who has great credit in that Province, to hire one hundred and fifty wagons and the necessary number of horses. This he accomplished with promptitude and fidelity, and it is almost the only instance of address and integrity which I have seen in all these provinces."—From Rupp's *History of Western Pennsylvania.*

235. This dialogue was first printed in *The Pennsylvania Gazette,* December 18, 1755. In March following it was reprinted in the *Gentleman's Magazine,* for a reason briefly stated in a sentence in the editorial comment. "The conduct of the assembly of Pennsylvania at this time of imminent danger, being thought by many somewhat extraordinary, everything which tends to give light into the motives of its proceedings must deserve attention."

At the close of a long conversation in which Y and Z present every current objection to the bill, and X answers them shrewdly, X quotes the Mosaic "military law," ending with the words, "Whosoever is FEARFUL and AFRAID let him return and depart early from Mount Gilead."

Z inquires, "How many departed?"

X makes answer, "The text says there departed 22,000, and there remained but 10,000. A very great sifting! . . . Now it seems to me that this militia law of ours is such a kind of sieve as the Mosaic proclamation. For with us not every man who has built a house, or planted a vineyard, or betrothed a wife, or is afraid of his flesh, but the narrow bigot, filled with sectarian malice (if such there be) who hates Quakers more than he loves his country, his friends, his wife or family, may say, *I won't engage, for I don't like*

the act; or, *I don't like the officers that are chosen;* or, *I don't like the articles of war;* and so we shall not be troubled with them, but all that engage will be hearty."

Then Z answered, "For my part, I am no coward, but hang me if I 'll fight to save the *Quakers.*"

But X had the last word,—

"That is to say, you won't pump ship, because 't will save the rats, as well as yourself."

"A Dialogue" is reprinted in full in S. III. 307–20.

244. You write that "you hear I ride about with a Party of Men with drawn Swords, which gives great Offense to some Folks." . . .

I must tell you the Matter as it was. The People happen to love me. Perhaps that 's my fault. When I was on the Frontier last Winter, a great number of the Citizens, as I was told, intended to come out and meet me at my Return to express their thankful Sense of my (small) Services. To prevent this, I made a forc'd March and got to Town in the Night, by which they were disappointed, and some a little chagrined. But as I could not fully conceal the Time of my setting out for Virginia 20 Officers of my Regiment with about 30 Grenadiers, presented themselves on Horseback at my Door just as I was going to mount, to accompany me to the Ferry about 3 Miles from Town. 'Till we got to the end of the Street which is about 200 Yards, the Grenadiers took it into their Heads to ride with their Swords drawn, but then they put them up peaceably unto their Scabbards, without hurting or even terrifying Man, Woman, or Child: and from the Ferry where we took leave and parted, they all returned as quietly to their Homes. This was the only Instance of the Kind; for tho' a greater Number met me at my Return, they did not ride with drawn Swords, having been told that Ceremony was improper, unless to compliment some Person of great Distinction.

I who am totally ignorant of Military Ceremonies, and above all things averse to making Show and Parade, or doing any useless Thing that can serve only to excite Envy or provoke Malice suffer'd at the Time much more Pain than I enjoy'd Pleasure and have never since given an Opportunity for anything of the Sort. — From a letter to Peter Collinson. Nov. 5, 1756. S. III. 347.

263. In the same year, 1752, Franklin contrived an arrangement

for bringing electricity from the clouds into his own house. He erected a pointed rod on the roof; this he brought down into one of the chambers, where it terminated in a small bell. Another iron rod he brought from the earth below; this also terminated in a bell so situated as to be six inches distant from the bell attached to the rod from above. Between the two, he suspended, by means of a silk thread, a ball. Of this apparatus and the action of the ball and bells, he wrote his friend, "I found the bells rang sometimes when there was no lightning or thunder, but only a dark cloud over the rod; that sometimes, after a flash of lightning, they would suddenly stop; and at other times, when they had not rung before, they would, after a flash, suddenly begin to ring; that the electricity was sometimes very faint, so that when a small spark was obtained, another could not be got for sometime after; at other times the sparks would follow extremely quick, and once I had a continual stream from bell to bell, the size of a crow-quill; even during the same gust there were considerable variations."

From this contrivance, Franklin used to fill his jars, or vials, with electricity for other experiments; when he built his new house he arranged a chime of bells in the same manner, but these proved annoying in heavy thunder showers, through constant ringing of the bells, and they were finally removed by the gentleman who bought Franklin's house after his death.

273. *Louisburg*, the most strongly fortified position in North America, had been captured by the colonists in the last war, in 1746. In the treaty of 1748, this fortress had been restored to the French with Cape Breton Island. The expedition of 1757, under Loudon, in company with which Franklin sailed from New York, had for its object the recapture of Louisburg. Loudon had not obtained reliable information as to the French garrison and found it stronger than he had expected. While he hesitated in doubt whether to make an attack or not, a French fleet of seventeen ships of the line appeared in the harbor. Upon this, Loudon sailed away ingloriously to New York, and the honor of taking Louisburg fell, in the next year, to a bolder and braver man.

284. This episode in Governor Denny's life occurred after Franklin had sailed for England, in 1754. The contest about money between

the assembly and the governor had dragged on until the winter of 1758–9. Great pressure was brought in Pennsylvania by the other colonies; war had again entered her territory and her frontier towns were again exposed to attacks from Indians. On the other hand, the governor was tired of resisting, for his salary could not be voted until he agreed to pass a money bill which included a tax on the proprietary estates; but this would be an act in direct disobedience to his instructions. At length, however, upon an assurance that the assembly would indemnify him for the bond he had given to follow strictly the orders of the proprietor, Governor Denny consented to pass the bill. He received at once a generous salary, but, a short time after, he was recalled and deprived of his office in consequence of this act.

Library Chair invented by Franklin

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